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UNDER THE BAN.

(*Le Maudit.*)

A Tale of the Nineteenth Century.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF M. L'ABBÉ * * *

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PART VI.

A VICTIM OF THE INQUISITION AT ROME.

UNDER THE BAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE FRONTIER.

THE road from Volscarceta to Valentano is tolerably good; and as Julio was an adept at mountain travelling, the little party pushed forward with considerable speed.

"You would have made a first-rate smuggler," said Jacomo, compassionately, "if you'd been brought up to the business." Jacomo, be it understood, thought that the pleasantest use to make of life was to risk it about a dozen times a day.

"Jacomo," whispered Julio, "listen. This is what I mean to do. If we are attacked, save my sister, at any sacrifice; I'll take care of myself. Once at Volscarceta, she can wait for me there. I'm sure you'll protect her. I can rely upon your fidelity."

On reaching Toscanella, the smuggler turned into a little side-path to avoid the possibility of meeting the sbirri in crossing the town,—regaining the direct road

about two kilometres on, the way growing rougher and rougher at every step.

Skirting the sides of Mount Calvello for some distance, they reached the deserted site of an old Etruscan town, known in the country by the name of Castro, after passing which they would be beyond the frontier. Hardly had they arrived there, however, before four men in masks suddenly sprang out upon them from a dense thicket at the entrance to the ruins, and in the bottom of the ravine. The smuggler recognized them at once as bandits of the worst kind, who had for some months been ravaging the country from Corneto to Viterba, no steps having been taken to hunt them down. Seeing the imminent danger, he said to Julio,—

"We are lost if we at all give way. Let us keep side by side, and push forward. The young lady had better stay behind."

The bandits drew up in battle array, and presented their carbines. Shots were exchanged on both sides, and one of the bandits fell dead. Jacomo seeing that Julio had been wounded, went up to him. "Never mind me," he said faintly, "take my revolver, and defend my sister."

Jacomo sustained a vigorous fire with the formidable weapon; and the three bandits, unprepared for so determined a resistance, took to their heels. At the first report of the fire-arms, Louise's horse had taken fright and galloped off in the direction of Viterba.

"Jacomo, save my sister," were Julio's last words, as

he sank back exhausted from pain and weakness. A ball had struck him on his left arm. At that moment, a moonbeam, struggling out of a dark cloud, lit up the scene. Julio had fallen at the foot of the hill; his face grew deadly pale, and his wound—as Jacomo discovered on searching for it—was welling with blood. The brave smuggler tore up a piece of the sufferer's shirt and bandaged his arm. Then he brought him a draught of water in his hat from a brook hard by, and sprinkled a little in his face,—without, however, succeeding in restoring him to his senses. Again he examined the wound very carefully, washed it out, staunched the blood, and re-adjusted the wrappings with the utmost skill and tenderness.

He himself had been struck in the engagement—on the forehead and on the left leg,—but he scarcely seemed to feel his wounds, slight as they were, and was only made sensible of their existence by a little pain which they entailed. He had too often had similar adventures in the mountains to trouble himself about such trifles.

Yet the position was decidedly critical. There was no house near. In the meantime, what was to be done in that wide desert of Castro?

It would soon be morning, he reflected; he would wait for daylight, and watch by the side of the young Frenchman, who scarcely seemed to breathe, so great had been his loss of blood. Possibly, some chance traveller, or smuggler friend of his own, might pass that way.

At a little distance, the bandit, who had been mortally wounded, was writhing in horrible convulsions.

Jacomo had scarcely waited on poor Julio for half an hour—trying, by rubbing his hands and chafing his temples and chest, to impart some warmth to his benumbed limbs, and, if possible, recall life—when the sound of horsemen was heard in the distance, along the road by which they had just come.

He conjectured that it was the bandits returning, reinforced in numbers. Climbing up a little hillock, and squatting down in a thick, stunted juniper-tree, which completely covered it with a dark hood of foliage, he was effectually concealed, as no one would have suspected for a moment that that dwarf shrub could have contained a man.

Yet he could see and hear everything that was going on. It was neither night nor day. The earliest streaks of the dawn were blending into the latest beams of the moon, and the result was that undefined tint which no palette could ever render.

All this time the horsemen were rapidly approaching, and soon reached the scene of the encounter.

"Here come the sbirri," said Jacomo, to himself, "and in good force too. I can do nothing for this unfortunate young man; but, at all events, I'll go in search of the young lady who has been ridden off with."

"Signor, here's a dead body," said one of the newcomers, in the dress of a rifleman.

"So there is," replied the man who appeared to be

at the head of the band, though he was in private clothes.

"Signor, here's another," said a second rifleman.

"They have been fighting here," said the chief. "This is some of Pietro Frappa's doing. His excellency the most reverend monseigneur at the head of the executive department had better look after these thieving, murderous fellows."

"Signor, it's Pietro Frappa himself. I know his face well."

"More the pity. His should have been a more glorious defeat than by the hand of some sturdy traveller or tourist, who had no notion . . . Let's have a look at the other."

And he approached Julio. A vivid streak of day was in the horizon. The face of the wounded, turned towards the east, reflected the light.

"Why, here's the very man we're after. This is our French friend himself; but what's become of his sister?"

And he sent off two spies to continue the search along the road to Volscarceta.

The rest dismounted; the chief approached Julio, felt his pulse, and noticed the bandages.

"Those bandits are good enough fellows, after all," he said. "They've been dressing his wounds. But look at poor Pietro Frappa. Is he quite dead?"

"As dead as a door-nail, signor, and without having shrived himself. God have mercy on his soul. He was a brave chap." While this somewhat original

funeral oration was going on, the chief produced a flask of brandy, which he carried about with him, poured a few drops down Julio's throat, bathed his temples, and made him inhale it. The cordial soon revived him; for his wound had been skilfully doctored. He came round much as a man might awake from a dream.

"Louise—Jacomo—where am I? Who are you?"

"Your friends, M. Julio, who pity you very much. Those from whom we come, desire only your soul's salvation. Better have dealings with them than with Pietro Frappa and his men. Just see the fearful condition to which they have reduced you! Come, try and get up. Ah, that's right. You are young enough yet, M. l'Abbé. There is plenty of vigour left in that muscular frame: and a wound in the arm is no very serious matter. Here is a perfectly quiet, tractable horse for you—try and mount."

"But my sister—my sister."

"Two men are gone to look after her. They will be sure to bring her back with them. Don't fuss yourself about anything or anybody. You may rely upon it, she will be treated with all proper respect. Here, you others—help M. l'Abbé to mount, and keep at his side in case he should faint. We'll go to Viterba—slowly at first."

Then, turning to Julio, with an authoritative air, he added—

"Yours will be a lifelong repentance for what you have done—violating a holy cloister, profaning a sanctuary of the Madonna. What shocking forgetfulness

of your priestly character! Acts like yours are thought a great deal of in Italy—a country where sacrilege is visited with a heavy punishment. It's different in France."

Julio caught nothing but the faint echo of this solemn reproof. He was just conscious enough to perceive that he was on horseback, that he was not with the smuggler, and that his dear Louise was no longer with him on Jacomo's trusty steed; he knew nothing more. The severity of his suffering made him shout out every now and then. Nature has mercifully provided that when the system receives any violent shock, insensibility frequently ensues, bringing with it a total oblivion of pain. The wound must needs be bound up; but consciousness does not return till the great pain is past.

Julio arrived at Viterba, and was instantly attended to, by order of the representatives of the Holy Office. The physician pronounced it as his opinion that his wound was by no means dangerous, and that, in a few days, he would be quite equal to the journey to Rome.

CHAPTER II.

THE VISIONARY OF VITERBA.

On the same day that the commissioner of the Holy Office arrested Julio, he effected, in accordance with strict orders from Rome, another capture of considerable importance. Viterba, like many other Italian towns, had its dreamer of dreams, its heroine of inspired illuminations. This lady, by name Laura Doni, was no common person. Her visions belonged by no means to the category of those experienced by a numerous order of damsels of her class, ever ready to place themselves at the service of the uppermost religious feeling, and seeking, from the authorities in Church and State, a formal sanction of their mission. It generally happens that almost all the various religious orders get hold of some one or another of this class, serving their end in the expectation of being, in due course, served by them. Not long ago, the Jesuits had lighted upon a specimen, who "revealed" all kinds of eulogistic wonders about them, and submitted every one she could get hold of to their guidance and influence.

Laura Doni, who indulged in these visions and

disclosures, and had many a familiar chat with her guardian-angel, was by no means easy to manage. Her singular vaticinations were so far famous, that they eventually reached Paris, where, among a certain section of highly pious and extremely erratic individuals, they obtained a certain amount of credence.

It may be interesting to detail a few of them, as they were delivered in public at Viterba, in the presence of the numerous throng attracted by her shouts, under the influence of sleep-walking:—

"The reign of Mary was about to commence. Not in vain had Pius IX. declared her immaculate conception. It was a true doctrine, and its proclamation would be the saving of the Church." But, strange inconsistency, and very intelligible explanation of the thunders now hurled against her by the Holy Office, Laura had gone on to predict that only by the overthrow of the temporal power could the Church be restored to her ancient splendour. She indulged in expositions of the Magnificat that were eloquent and even sublime.

The words, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat," were, according to her teaching, a prophecy of that special overthrow on which she insisted. Pius IX., she held, was to be the last king, and the first humble Pontiff whose head was to be encircled with the lowly crown of the Crucified. Thus she interpreted the words, "He hath exalted the humble and meek."

Here was a curious medley of mysticism and politics.

Laura was approached in a thousand different ways, in the hope of being made accessible to wholesome influence. Unbounded promises were made to her, conditional on her standing up for the sceptre as necessary for the support of the keys. All these, however, she rejected; sent Antonelli's agents about their business, though they had been at the trouble of coming to Viterba on purpose to look her up; and almost went so far as to kick the delegate of the Holy Office out of her room, in return for the numerous visits he had paid her by way of flattering her vanity, and thus gaining her over to his suggestions.

Assuming all her Roman dignity, she avowed that she dared not lie to the Holy Spirit or barter her conscience; and, from that day, set to work more vigorously than ever to spread abroad a belief in the speedy fulfilment of the obnoxious prophecy. Her influence was now becoming dangerous. Italian Liberals availed themselves of her predictions to kindle up popular enthusiasm, and sustain the impression that the day was close at hand which would see Rome the capital of the new Italian kingdom. The delegate forwarded to head-quarters a terrible report on her case. As she happened to be rich, and a member of a powerful family, the best course appeared to be to bring these utterances of hers, in some way or other, within the cognizance of the Inquisition, and thus withdraw her from the civil power to that impartial tribunal which has a habit of incarcerating awkward people, and judging them afterwards.

So poor Julio and the formidable prophetess were bundled off to Rome in the same shabby conveyance. Four sbirri of the Holy Office, two in front and two behind, guarded the vehicle. As for Julio, he was supremely indifferent; but the lady was beside herself with rage.

"The wretches! the villains!" she cried, "their downfall is at hand. Beloved Mother, thy reign will soon commence on the earth, and then farewell to Cæsar's purple in the Church of God!"

And, standing up in the car, looking haughtier than ever, flinging aside, with one hand, the veil which covered her face, and, stretching out the other towards Rome, she resembled, with her thin pale figure, one of those mediæval statues of emaciated saints, whose form could scarcely be detected beneath the folds of drapery.

"No more imperial power," she cried; "no more of pagan Cæsar as Christ's high priest! Mary, immaculate Mary, thou hast at last placed thy foot on the serpent's head, and the nations prostrate before thee will soon sound thy triumph. And, as for you, my fellow-countrywomen—my sisters—the era of liberty is at hand. You will be agents in the accomplishment of glorious issues. You will reign with Mary, and by her. Hitherto, the Church has represented only the brute force of man; it is now about to put forth as its power the tender love of woman, in the person of the Immaculate Virgin. Pontiff of Rome, cease your efforts to scrape together the fragments of your triple crown shattered by the iron hand of revolution. Your

real reign is coming—your absolute kingship over human souls. Your infallibility will be, as it ever has been, the dogma passionately clung to by a Christian people; but, first, 'He hath put down the mighty from their seat,' must receive its accomplishment. No more supreme rulers in the Church of Christ;—no more humiliating degradation of the sex, restored to their rightful rank by Mary the Immaculate. Woman should be a priest as well as man; for she is purer than he, and better understands the influence and the reign of love. And it is because you—Pius IX.—have promulgated that immortal truth which underlies this glorious reformation, that you will be permitted to vacate your temporal throne, erected by the hand of man—you, the mighty, will be put down from an unworthy seat, in order that you may rise grandly from the moment's humiliation—the head of a spiritual Church—realizing, in your own person, the glorious assurance, 'He hath exalted the humble and meek.'"

One of the gravest errors—it might almost be said the greatest disgrace—of the Catholic priesthood of the nineteenth century, has been its unscrupulous patronage, from a motive apparently laudable, of the alarming development of mysticism in the bosom of the religious world. In great social crises, the pretended spirit of prophecy—by no means foreign to human nature—exhibits itself in increased proportions; social economists and philosophers entertain presentiments on the subject of social emancipation. In the religious world, this tendency assumes preternatural powers. Now it is

God who appears; now the Virgin; or, again, guardian-angels—and all is in perfect sincerity and good faith. The incredulous are wrong in supposing that these deluded visionaries are a tribe of impostors. In almost every case, they are weak-minded women, buried in a cloister, or, if not, leading a simple and austere life.

There is no question as to their number. The most popular among them are the children of La Salette and the young girl of Lourdes. Very few nuns have been without their visions; that is to say, those who pass their time in what is called "contemplation." Sisters of charity are too busy and too practically engaged to find leisure for that sort of thing. And all this spreads abroad, and becomes a common subject of discussion. The contagion seizes on unduly excited and imaginative subjects, and they keep up the ball. One after another comes forward with contributions to the stock; and so the evil expands to an alarming extent.

The general refrain of all these predictions circulated for nearly the last hundred years,—so far back does the mischief date,—is, that Paris will be burnt: a prediction peculiarly palatable to those who have been entirely led away by mystical extravagances; and, consequently, receiving their most implicit belief. True, these doctors differ. Some have questioned the return of Louis XVIII., announced by Martin de Gallardon; while others, with a boldness worthy of the most advanced sceptic, are of opinion that, in spite of all that has been said by the heroines of La Salette,

Pius IX. will, after all, escape crucifixion at the hands of the Italian party; but all agree in shouting, "PARIS WILL BE BURNT." Paris, the most illustrious of cities, is doomed, by these gloomy enthusiasts, to the fate of accursed Babylon. They see only the stain on the hem of her garment. The halo of glory that surrounds her brow escapes their notice.

Yet the great home of mind and intellect is not thus to perish! Happily, even for you, birds of ill omen! for were your prophecy to be accomplished, she would bury in her ruins,—along with the infidelity which you cast in her face, but which (though this you forget) you have provoked by your absurdities,—that eager apostolate in the cause of liberty which dismays you, as well as that active spirit which originates all those glorious and holy achievements, accepted, indeed, by Rome, but not of her devising. Paris is more thoroughly Rome than Rome herself. It is in her bosom that that life and vigour are circulating which will yet cause the Church to blossom as the rose. Away with you, idle and mistaken dreamers! Cease to visit her with your hatred, and to direct against her your sinister utterances. You are outraging Catholicism itself. Think you that if Paris were burnt you would find it still surviving in her ashes?

CHAPTER III.

THE ENTRY INTO ROME.

It was the 22nd of November, 1860. That evening the Corso was thronged with people; groups had collected in the Place del Popolo, and in many another quarter, at the Campo Vaccino, and on the bridge of the Castle of St. Angelo. The Roman aristocracy, according to custom, was out driving on Monte Pincio. Artists, idlers, ladies fond of displaying themselves, crowded the graceful slopes leading to that charming eminence, which commands a full view of the Eternal City. French officers, belonging to the army of occupation, mixed in the crowd; there, too, might have been seen peaceful citizens, never alone, but in knots of two or three. The Romans, by way of testifying their gratitude for the protection accorded by France to the Pontifical Government under which it was their privilege to live, had the habit of fighting with every French soldier they might chance to catch by himself in out-of-the-way parts. Since then, a strict order has been issued, forbidding the military to go out alone.

On the day in question there was a strange excite-

ment in the town. Not a disturbance, nor anything approaching to it, only the Italian Committee had just posted up one of their proclamations. Some copies had been boldly stuck on the walls, in broad daylight; and fragments were yet to be seen, left by the police, on the balustrades of the long staircase leading to "Alla Trinità del Monte," on the columns of the churches, and on the public monuments.

There was a great talk about this proclamation, the effect of which had been electrical, and which, while it recommended the greatest possible caution, called upon the Romans to be ready for a decisive blow. Yet none of the hopes which it raised have hitherto been realized. The patience of the people is nevertheless as abiding as ever; and even though the hour of their deliverance is yet in the future, theirs is the glory of having avoided needless disturbances, and reserved for better days their patriotic hopes.

In the midst of the eager demand, during the last few years, of Rome for the capital of Italy, and the eager longing with which the boon has been sought from the reluctant hands of diplomacy, the enslaved populace have reined in their excitement with a discipline beyond all praise. The voice of the national party, in its every utterance, has been that of the great country herself; yet not a single struggle has warranted the intervention of armed force.

The carriage containing the two prisoners entered Rome by the Porta del Popolo, and followed the road leading to the Holy Office. As the various inquisitive

groups of bystanders watched the carefully guarded vehicle, a stir of curiosity, not altogether free from uneasiness, was visible amongst them.

"Political scapegoats, most probably," said some.

Others, observing the presence of the sbirri, concluded that the trusty police had captured a couple of rogues of the very worst class.

As the procession moved on, one of the people, who knew the driver, came up.

"Who are these?" he asked.

"Prisoners of the Holy Office."

"Holy Virgin!" replied the Roman, with a compassionate look at the pale, tranquil face of Julio.

The words "Holy Office" passed from mouth to mouth of the gathering crowd, and created a general feeling of commiseration.

The groups of eager questioners became more and more numerous as the prison was neared. The street in which it stood was fairly crowded when the sbirri helped Julio and the prophetess to alight. The stern, commanding figure of Laura Doni had in it something terribly majestic. She looked like the angel of vengeance, brought thither to punish all the guilt and wrong-doing of Papal royalty through so many centuries, and holding in her hands the vials of the wrath of God. Her lips seemed almost parted to the denunciation against the ill-starred Pius IX., the representative of royal Pontiffs. "The day of your judgment is at hand; the hour when this awful score shall be settled to the uttermost farthing. Mene! Tekel! Peres!"

There was that about her that convinced the people that she was no culprit, but, rather, a deliverer. With a step of stately majesty she crossed the threshold of the building; while Julio, on the other hand, appeared like an angel of peace, come to proclaim the approaching advent of a day of restoration, himself its herald.

The ponderous gates swung to behind them, and the crowd dispersed sorrowfully.

"No getting out of there," said one; while a few of the more educated repeated to themselves the well-known words of Dante,—

"Voi ch'intrate, lasciate ogni speranza!"

Then rose up, loud and clear, a deep cry from the last receding group,—

"The hour of your rescue is at hand!"

The governor of the prison, a sinister-looking man, inscribed the name, title, and description of Julio on his register. By his side was a young laic, whose sharp, cat-like face was not the best qualified to inspire confidence. All necessary formalities having been gone through, just as the jailer was about to conduct Julio to the gloomy dungeon that awaited him, the young man came up, and said in a bantering tone,—

"Had a pleasant journey, M. l'Abbé?"

Julio looked at him. It was the spy who, under the name of the Abbé Denis, had followed the unfortunate priest from town to town.

"May God forgive you!" was his calm reply.

"Go along with you. I am quite content. I wanted

to get you over here at once; it would have saved me a horrid bore of a journey, tramping after you from place to place, especially that night when I found you on the frontier, covered with blood from the bullets of Pietro Frappa. However, I hope I shall be well paid for all my trouble and fatigues. Good-by, M. l'Abbé; let me recommend you, as a friend, not to write against the Jesuits another time."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRISONS OF THE INQUISITION.

A STRANGER visiting Rome, and gazing round that magnificent circular area, decorated with lofty porticoes, in front of St. Peter's, would hardly suppose that the gorgeous colonnade hid from view a low gloomy district, full of ruins, and intersected by narrow, winding, badly-paved streets. Should you take a conveyance to the Vatican, the driver will bring you through one of the chief of these, stretching along the left side of the arcade, and winding on between the high walls of a little Campo Santo, constructed on the model of the one at Pisa, and, like it, made of earth from the Holy Land; and a large building, with a black front pierced by narrow windows, never penetrated by a single sunbeam, respecting which you doubt, as you stare at it, whether it is a house of correction, a prison, or a lepers' hospital. To say the truth, it is something of all these; it is the head-quarters of the Holy Office.

At the time of the revolution in Rome, when the Republic was proclaimed under constituted triumvirs,

the first place which the populace visited was this terrible edifice. To them, its capture seemed like a second taking of the Bastile. Just as that odious fortress had appeared to the French, as exhibiting the royal will of kings executed in prison cells, where justice is laughed to scorn, and the accused forbidden to defend himself, so the Romans looked upon the Holy Office as expressing the sovereign pleasure of a priesthood developed into a kingly power, supposing no one to dispute the doctrines which it sets forth, and menacing with eternal punishment those who incurred in any way its high displeasure. It was not against the Castle of St. Angelo that their wrath was directed. That, they regarded as a relic of the ancient city—Adrian's mote. The fortress of the Popes they were willing to respect; the cells of the Inquisition were their game.

Not that they found many prisoners in them; but one was tenanted by a corpse. Many a day had it lain there, forgotten by the tribunal overhead; or, perhaps—horrible thought!—condemned by some vindictive inquisitor to a death of starvation.

That secret murder was doubtless horrible enough, but it was but one instance out of many. Since the Pontificate of Pius IX., the Inquisition has been greatly curbed, though his Holiness has never ventured to suppress it altogether.

There are few who are not familiar with the fearful details that were made known when the cells of the Inquisition were penetrated and laid bare in the revolution of 1848: — Skeletons chained up against the

wall; others lying on the floor; bodies buried up to the shoulders in quick-lime — the most horrible punishment of all; rooms full of instruments of torture; cells in the drains, where wretched victims half-smothered in mud and pollution, used to be kept alive in their misery by a daily dole of bread; with an endless series of other atrocities no less appalling.

Some of the writers of these accounts ask how it was that the people failed to efface every vestige of the infamous abode. For our part, we are far from regretting the omission. On the contrary, we should have preferred to have seen everything scrupulously preserved in the state in which it was found:—The shrivelled-up corpses, the instruments of torture, the human mould in the underground passages, and that court, a hundred metres long, where victims were secretly burnt after public exhibitions of the kind had become no longer safe. We should like to see all this kept up, as a sort of gloomy museum, open to public inspection, where men may learn what religious bigotry did in days gone by, and what it may again do at any moment, should a bigoted monk chance to mount the Pontifical throne. For it must be acknowledged that all the guilt of the Church lies at the monastery door. Monasticism, be it understood, is utterly without any Christian element—it has nothing of the spirit of the Church in it: it is but an accident, an excrescence more or less objectionable according to the character of its development, but always injurious. With this system have originated all the extravagances of religious

bigotry; and the attentive student of the Church's history will see at once that the only error of the secular clergy during the fatal periods of pitiless persecution, consisted in their weakly allowing full scope to the monks, and surrendering to them too easily their own proper rights. Granted that Pius V. decreed that the merciless punishment of heretics was true clemency, such language arose from the fact that Pius V., before he became Pope, was a Dominican, and that the Dominicans were installed at the Inquisition. On the other hand, if it be true that Pius IX., freed from counteracting influences, has shown himself the very reverse in spirit of this frantic bigot—if it be admitted that his gentle and amiable disposition is utterly opposed to every species of cruelty—it must be remembered that his shoulders have never been disgraced by the monk's gown.

Julio would have been incarcerated in one of the terrible Inquisition cells, but for the circumstance that after the Roman crisis, the French general thought that the Inquisition building, which had been half destroyed by the populace, with its extensive offices, was admirably suited, from its proximity to the Vatican and the Holy Office, to serve as a barrack for the French infantry.

What vicissitudes mark the history of human events! While the reader is casting his eye over these pages, the tricolour is floating over the dark low gateway of the Holy Office. To the left, stands a sentry-box; a peaceable Norman, a jolly Poictiers lad, or a cheery

Gascon, is mounting guard in front of that dreadful portal, which never opened once, except to entomb a victim.

Tourists who go the round of Roman curiosities, really ought to pay a visit to the French barracks behind the circular colonnade, and ask to see the dungeons. Faugh! they smell of dead bodies still.

On the restoration of Pius IX., after his return from Gaeta, the Holy Office erected in haste a temporary building with a few low, narrow cells, in the hope that on the departure of the French army, and the consolidation of the Papal power, they would be able to recover their old abode.

Temporary indeed! Appropriate to a mere temporary institution,—destined, like the tiara itself, to pass away before long, and living only on sufferance during that scant interval which diplomacy has characterized by the sapient title of the *Statu quo.*

So pertinaciously do institutions dying of old age cling to the traditions of their past, even more than in the days of their highest prosperity—observing the least important of their customs and rules, with scrupulous fidelity—that there is at this moment a president of the Holy Office (a cardinal of the Roman Church), a keeper of the seals, a commissary-general, who is always a Dominican; an assessor, invariably a prelate and chamberlain of the Pope; councillors belonging to the various religious orders; officers and ministers; and all as thoroughly organized as if the power of the institution were as supreme as ever, with this one trifling

difference, however, that the altars erected once for the glory of God and the holy chair, smoke no longer with sacrificial victims! The Sacred Congregation holds meetings three times a week;—on Monday at the establishment of the Holy Office, where the commissary-general and the councillors assemble; on Wednesday, at the Convent of Santa-Maria Sopra Minerva, belonging to the Dominican fathers; and on Thursdays, under the presidency of the Pope, to consult on the causes for trial, and matters connected with the inquisition and heresy. Here the cardinals take their places at the board, more or fewer as they are designated by his Holiness, with a large sprinkling of prelates, and learned theologians picked out from all the various religious orders, and decorated with the title of councillors of the Holy Office. Julio and Laura Doni were immured each in a separate dungeon, a measure beneficial, doubtless, to the Pontificate of Pius IX., and very calculated to promote the salvation of the Church, while a judicial information was, according to custom, being prepared against them.

The assessor entrusted with getting up the edicts, repaired to the prison in his official capacity, and summoned Julio to appear before him.

The four following accusations formed the points on which he subjected him to a severe questioning.

First, that he, Julio de la Clavière, a priest of the diocese of T——, had wilfully and deliberately broken into the choir-cloister of the reverend Benedictine nuns of Notre Dame de Forcassi; such act being opposed to

the privileges and rights of the order of the Society of St. Bennet, and strictly prohibited by their canons.

Next, that he had perpetrated an act of sacrilege in a holy place in the execution of his outrageous assault —a crime punishable with the galleys.

Furthermore, that this sacrilege had been committed during a service of special solemnity, and in the presence of the assembled faithful, to their great scandal and dismay.

Lastly, that he, the afore-mentioned priest, had written a libellous pamphlet against the sacred order of the Jesuits; an order specially devoted to the interest of the Papal throne, and solemnly recognized with approbation by the Sovereign Pontiffs; that he had, by an act of forgery, attributed an anonymous publication to a cardinal of the Roman Church; that this publication or religious testament, as it was called, was full of unwarrantable assertions, that it savoured strongly of the deadliest heresy, and was peculiarly repugnant to the views of the faithful.

The assessor's report was based upon this inquiry. No bringing up of the accused before a judge; no witnesses examined on both sides; no counsel for the defence; not even a sentence always, except when it was advantageous to publish it; in that case the judgment was posted up on the doors of the principal churches; being generally ten or twelve years' imprisonment, according as the accused was more or less friendless, or had no money, or means of getting any, to purchase his freedom.

Julio replied with brief, simple dignity to the questions of the assessor. At the end of the examination he was told to sign the paper of inquiry.

"I shall do nothing of the kind."

Such was the first and last act in this singular exhibition of ecclesiastical justice. Julio had every prospect of remaining in his cell for many a long year,—untroubled by president, commissary-general, assessor, or councillors. The authorities of the Holy Office are in the habit of undertaking the permanent charge of their prisoners, and would be very much surprised if any one interfered with their arrangement. The door quietly closed between Julio and the world.

But we have omitted to describe his cell. Imagine a hole ten feet long by six wide; no window; one door with a grating in it, protected by iron bars, to admit the light; a pallet, a little stool, a small table, an earthen pot, and the bare ground. And the tenant of this wretched place was one who, had he followed the time-honoured, well-worn path—had he omitted the dream of Catholic reform, had he shrunk from audacious handling of the sacred ark of the Church, the Company of Jesus—had he swelled with others the priestly mass, the vast majority, crying up the temporal power of the Pope, extolling the Jesuits' sanctity and zeal, fawning on episcopal omnipotence—had this been his course, these his views, this his policy and his attitude, instead of being "in carcere duro," he might have been lounging at this moment in an archbishop's drawing-room, caressed, cuddled, applauded, receiving,

day after day, new honours and rewards ecclesiastical: soon vicar-general, then bishop, then cardinal. Positively, these superior intellects, these deep thinkers, are dreadfully wanting in tact. Julio, for instance, was very foolish!

There he lies, meanwhile, the disdained offscouring of the priesthood—the last of the Hussite race, and of those other noble martyr spirits, who dared to speak as they thought of Papal Rome. Ay, sirs, there he lies; and should his jailer perchance forget for a few coming days to toss him his scrap of prison bread, there he will lie till death arrives, summoned by the unutterable pangs of starvation. In his expiring agony, he may gnaw his flesh from his bones; and when he is gone, none will think upon his corpse—no, nor even, when the door is opened to admit another to be dealt with after the same fashion, will they care to remove the dead in his decay!

CHAPTER V.

LANS-LE-BOURG.

QUITTING Upper Italy, to return to France, and crossing the border of the rich basin of the Po, there rises up before the traveller the immense mountain chain of the Western Alps. The period of their emerging from their calcareous basin was one marked by the mightiest convulsions in the physical history of our earth. The elevation of the Alps, of which the Pyrenees, though the date of their irruption is more recent, appear to be a continuation, divides Europe into two sections. Of these the most extensive, to the north and west, is cut off, in every respect of climate, habits, and manners, from the southern and eastern. Above the Alps, is Europe properly so called; below, three immense peninsulas, Greece, Italy, and Spain, the cradles of the Greek and Latin races; this district is more thoroughly oriental in its characteristics than the rest of the Continent. The olive, the orange, and the palm proclaim it as the East.

To cross that barrier, on returning from Rome by the Apennine chain, between Florence and Bologna,

there are two grand roads, prepared at an immense labour and expense along the sides of the Alpine ridge: one by Mount Cenis, leading into Savoy; and another by Simplon, into Switzerland. Italy is still in the height of its glorious autumn weather; oranges may be gathered in the fields of Monte di Gaëta, at the entrance of that celebrated Campania where Hannibal fell, and where masses of piled-up snow array with their white drapery the gigantic summits of the Alps. Nor is it only for a few hours, as in the Pyrenees, that the traveller has to battle against snow and piercing cold, but throughout the entire route. Indeed, he may be deemed a lucky adventurer who finds the track unburied, or who escapes the perilous chance of guides losing their way.

Should you escape the many dangers that throng this mountain journey, after a day of incredible fatigue, the least peril of which would be to perish from the cold, the first town you would reach on the French side would be Lans-le-Bourg. There, a large hotel, with great chimneys containing roaring fires, presents the appearance of a sumptuous Louvre; while escape for a time from an outside temperature which turns the breath into icicles, even though it be enjoyed in the interior of a shut-up carriage, is welcome as a landing in the Fortunate Islands.

So here we are at Lans-le-Bourg, on an autumn day, as has been already said.

In the midst of this unpretending village, which has been designated, for reasons unknown to ourselves, by

the more high-sounding title of a town, is a modest, unpretending church. There is a priest at the altar—a tall, strong man, whose stern features, contracted by the dents and furrows in his face, indicate the suffering through which he has passed. On his forehead is a scar, recently healed. He might have been taken for a Crimean soldier, come back to Savoy, and seeking, in the quiet discharge of priestly functions, a pleasant repose after the hardships of campaigning. He has a deep bass voice, with tender, musical modulations, which give it a peculiar charm. His movements are rapid and abrupt—a circumstance, however, which does not affect his dignified discharge of the sacred duties he has undertaken.

He goes through the ceremonial hurriedly, and celebrates the mass in true military style. Then giving his blessing to five or six females kneeling near the railing, the service over, he retires.

The church is cold, but a stove in the sacristy diffuses there a pleasant warmth. The priest disrobes, kneels before a priedieu, and repeats certain thanksgiving prayers inscribed on a card hanging near, and once more rises.

Turning to the sacristan, he asks whether there are any sick to be visited that day.

"I know of no one dangerously ill, M. le Vicaire," replies that functionary. "There is a stranger, however, who arrived from Italy two days ago, at the Hôtel de la Porte, and who is in great distress. Both she and the driver who brought her found the passage of

Mount Cenis terribly severe. They were all but buried in the snow."

"I understand."

And accordingly, in the afternoon, the curate of Lans-le-Bourg took his way, wrapped up in a well-wadded overcoat, towards the Hôtel de la Porte.

One of the waiters asked the young lady if she had any objection to receive a visit from M. le Vicaire, and returned with a request that he would come in.

He introduced himself with that quiet ease and gentle sympathy of manner which invalids prize so highly. A smiling physician or priest, to such persons, is always a welcome visitor, the very sight of whom is an instant relief.

It will have already been divined that the stranger was no other than Louise. Carried to a considerable distance along the Volscarceta road by Jacomo's horse, she had eventually reached the Tuscan territory, overwhelmed with anxiety as to her brother's fate. Jacomo had crept out of his hiding-place in the bush, after having witnessed the capture of Julio, fully convinced that the young Frenchman, once in the hands of the sbirri, would have to expiate his achievements at Forcassi, by imprisonment for life. His first anxiety was to recover his runaway nag, and to escort Louise to the limits of the Papal States. Hurrying along the road to Volscarceta, he soon succeeded in discovering her track, by marks which none but a smuggler could have detected, and reached the frontier town almost immediately after her.

It was necessary that he should tell her the mournful truth respecting her brother; and, in doing so, he was at length convinced that the two were really related as they said they were; and, moreover, that they were the victims of a merciless persecution. Rewarded handsomely for the service he had already rendered, he pledged himself to still further efforts in her cause, and gave her, in her painful emergency, the wisest counsel which his experience could suggest.

"Your presence in the Roman States," he urged, "is useless, and even dangerous; since nothing would be easier than for your enemies to lay hands upon you, under the pretence of claiming to know how, and by what circumstances, you became connected with the convent at Forcassi, and what might be the nature of the engagements binding you to them. Now, in this precious land of ours, an inquiry may be protracted during six years. Not unfrequently, the prisoner even, and his alleged crime, are alike forgotten. So you had better go back to France. Your brother is in the hands of the Holy Office—fearful fellows those to have to deal with. It will require a very powerful intervention to rescue him—and this you must try to obtain. Ply the Imperial Government in his behalf. Go to the Emperor himself, if such a step is necessary."

Louise saw at once the good sense of his advice. It was useless for her to risk her own safety by going after her brother. She must try and save him. Full of indescribable grief, she set out from the Tuscan frontier, and travelled to Mount Cenis by Florence and Turin,

hoping to get on as quickly as possible to Lyons and Paris, that she might set about her cherished task without delay.

The passage of Mount Cenis had proved exceedingly difficult. The carriage became imbedded in the snow, whence Louise, half-dead and frozen, was extricated by the monks of the hospice, under whose care she passed two most anxious days. At first, her onward progress threatened to be indefinitely interrupted. It turned out, however, on investigation, that the conveyance, though half shattered, was capable of being sufficiently repaired to convey them to Lans-le-Bourg. Meanwhile, her excessive fatigues, added to her overwhelming solicitude, told powerfully on her enfeebled health. Those few days had made havoc in her beauty, and added years to her apparent age. Her solitary, deserted position—her terrible suspense—the all but despair which weighed her down, were ruining her spirits and constitution; and her physical frame, always predisposed to delicacy, could no longer bear up under the pressure of mental suffering.

Accustomed to form his conclusions as to the people he visited, the curate of Lans-le-Bourg saw at once that her state of health was not precarious, but that the trouble under which she laboured, whatever it might be, demanded instant attention. So he made no mention of confession or the last sacraments, but cheered her up in her present sufferings, assuring her that a little rest would considerably alleviate them, and leading her to thank the all-merciful God, Who sustains His people

in safety in the presence of danger, and has secret designs of His own in every event of life.

His genial words at once won her confidence. She saw at once that the man before her was one to be relied upon.

"Monsieur l'Abbé," she said, "I am in great need of your advice; my position is most embarrassing."

And she described, as briefly as possible, her brother's arrest, her own flight from the Pontifical States, and her intention of going alone to Paris to procure official interference in his behalf."

As she related her short history, the abbé coloured violently; he seemed intensely, almost greedily, interested in the very smallest details. With an agitated voice he ventured the inquiry,—

"Do you come from T——?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you the sister of the Abbé Julio de la Clavière, the vicar of St. Aventin?"

"I am. Do you know my brother?"

"I owe him my life, young lady. I was once vicar of the valley of Lys. Your brother is my benefactor, to whom I am infinitely indebted. My purse, my heart, my all, are at your service. Command me in whatever way you please."

"You are right, sir, in what you just now said. Providence, indeed, has its purposes in our affairs. I have been brought to a friend of Julio's. You revive all my courage. That prop, which I needed, I have now found. I shall no longer have to tread my

difficult path alone. You will save brother and sister together."

"I will do my utmost, at all events. Whilst you proceed to Paris, to press your appeal upon the Government for your brother's release, I will go straight to Rome, and see if there is no way of snatching him from the claws of those villains at the Holy Office. The Inquisition will have to be very sharp to thwart me. There are at present, in my desk, notes to the amount of many thousand francs, which I got from an uncle who, as it turns out, has died in the very nick of time. They will act as a golden key, with which one might unlock the door of the Vatican itself."

Louise raised her eyes to heaven in grateful acknowledgment, and stretched out her hand to the noble-hearted, generous priest.

In a few days the fever had entirely disappeared, and she was strong enough to undertake the journey to Paris. Loubère, meanwhile, had crossed the Alps, passed rapidly through Turin and Florence, and arrived at Rome.

CHAPTER VI.

LOUBÈRE AT THE GÈSU.

On reaching Rome, Loubère, straightforward as he was, and consequently a bad hand at playing a hypocritical game, saw, nevertheless, that to attain his object he required the utmost caution. His task was indeed difficult; especially as he had to avoid the suspicions of the Jesuits, ever on the alert, through their police, to discover any threatened hostility. The Pyreneeans combine with their mountain energy something of the astuteness of the Gascon, whose blood they often share, and hence are quite capable of being thorough Gascons at a pinch. Utterly free from anything like baseness or deceit, they have, for all that, a marvellous instinct and readiness of resource in cases of danger. Moreover, in a country so full of natural perils, this aptitude for adventure and hairbreadth escape is greatly developed, without at all impairing the honesty of their character. Take, for example, the peasant of Auvergne; in his arduous and critical mountain life, he displays, under his apparent geniality, all the clever astuteness of which we have been speaking.

Loubère concocted a complete scheme for his guidance. He did not at first take up his quarters at the Hôtel de la Minerve, where he would have infallibly become an object of scrutiny in the centre of a priestly crowd, collected there from all corners of the Catholic world—but in the little out-of-the-way street, delle Vecchierelle, very winding and very unobserved, lost, in fact, in the centre of the vast buildings of the Gèsu. There he obtained, at the modest sum of a few paolis a month, a room more comfortable even than he required for the retired and unobtrusive style in which he proposed residing in the Eternal City.

He repaired immediately to the cardinal vicar, who acted under the Pope as Bishop of Rome, and presented, for due inspection, his ecclesiastical vouchers, which were strictly in order. Being asked in what church he wished to officiate, he replied that he was utterly unacquainted with Rome.

"Where are you residing?" asked the secretary.

"In the Via delle Vecchierelle."

"Very well, then you are close to the church of the Gèsu. As you are French, you had better officiate there."

"Thank you. But haven't they a numerous staff of priests already?"

"Not many, just now, I fancy."

During this brief dialogue, the cardinal's secretary had been much struck by the manly, honest face and figure of Loubère. He felt himself instinctively drawn to him; and, from motives of kindness, offered him a

letter of recommendation to the Rev. Father Sacriste of the Gèsu.

"I am extremely obliged to you, sir," said Loubère.

And, offering his hand, he thanked him very heartily.

The official having given him a few lines in Italian, a language which he knew perfectly, written very carefully and legibly, he added them to his other papers, and took his leave.

The very first thing the next morning, he repaired to the Gèsu fully attired as a French priest—a garb which is always effective in Rome, where priests generally are not over particular in their dress. Loubère presented his "celebret," together with the letter he had received.

"I bid you heartily welcome," said the sacristy father.

And every facility was offered him, with that obsequious courtesy so characteristic of the Jesuits. To which Loubère, who was desirous to be perfectly free without shocking his Jesuit friend, replied,—

"I shall trouble you with very little of my company, reverend father, during my stay in Rome, as there are several excursions in the neighbourhood which I wish to make. On these days you won't see me at the Gèsu."

"You are entirely your own master with us, M. l'Abbé. But wouldn't you like to be introduced to some of our fathers? We always give a hearty greeting to French priests—many of them are French themselves."

An idea struck Loubère.

"Have you a Father de Cambiac among you?"

"Yes, we have. He is one of our most respected members."

This Father de Cambiac belonged to the powerful family of the Marquis de Cambiac, one of the richest and most illustrious in old Languedoc. He had been a fellow-pupil of his at the seminary at T——. Moreover, they had conceived for one another that warm affection of early years—one of the most generous characteristics of youth, and which survives, as a rule, many a vicissitude of after-life.

This worthy man had become a Jesuit, being about the last man in the world qualified for the position by his natural disposition. He had been eagerly received by the ambitious society, so partial to great names, and had made rapid progress by virtue of his high descent —a qualification more appreciated in Rome than anywhere else. The new Jesuit was passionately fond of numismatic studies, a taste to which the society by no means objected. Under the pretence of furnishing him, in a large city, with every possible facility for pursuing his favourite researches, they had brought him to Rome, where his simple integrity, his amiability, and the unmistakable evidence which he gave of being a genuine scholar, soon won for him general admiration. So he came to be a prominent man among them, and was enrolled as one of their great council.

Whether it was that Loubère felt in himself a lively return of his old affection for his dear abbé marquis, as

he used to call him at the seminary, or whether from an instinctive desire to get admission within the mysterious Gèsu, or whether, again, because it suited his plans to clear himself of all possible suspicion in any single quarter by his cordial relations with one of the most dignified members of the order, he rejoined eagerly,—

"Then Father de Cambiac is here! Ah, so much the better. I shall, indeed, rejoice to meet him again. We were old seminarists together. I am greatly indebted to you for the gratifying intelligence. I will come and see him to-morrow."

"I will tell him of your intended call."

"You are very kind."

Accordingly, the next day, Loubère, who, by this time, had assumed the air of an important personage, called at the Gèsu, and inquired for Father de Cambiac. The porter intimated his arrival, and, the next moment, the two young Frenchmen were together again, recalling those happy bygone days, when imagination invests everything with its bewitching spell, and hearts yearning after such healthy interchanges cement the first indissoluble ties of life-long friendship.

The Jesuit, who had all the geniality of an honest student, received him with the sincerest affection. The memories which Loubère revived of those years of the past, the flight of which every man regrets, with his extreme ingenuousness, for he was not in the least changed—recalled thoroughly to his friend's recollection the "ours Pyrénéen" of old times, as he used once to call him.

"We won't stay here any longer, dear friend—come to my room."

And, passing through a long corridor, and mounting a stone staircase which led to the first-floor, they reached an immense gallery, lighted by narrow windows, very high up. A series of apartments stretched away to their left, and the third in the row was that of Father de Cambiac.

For a dignitary of the order it was by no means costly in its arrangements. The room was spacious and airy, opening into an inner apartment, which again admitted into the passage, and served at once as a library and bed-chamber. Indeed, all the apartments on this floor were exactly alike. Each father had his large room and his library. Loubère left the Gèsu thoroughly delighted with his recovered friend, who made him promise to come and see him frequently during his stay in Rome.

"I will give orders," he added, "that you may be admitted at once to my quarters at the hours I have just named. We can chat about our beloved France and dear old Languedoc. It will be 'l'ours' and 'le marquis' over again."

On one occasion Loubère found him almost in tears. The conversation soon turned upon the cause of his distress, they had become so increasingly intimate in these frequent visits. Le Cambiac opened his heart to him more freely than he had ever done before.

"No, my friend," he said, "I am not happy here. You were correct in your suspicions, for I am not

satisfied with myself for being in this place. Nothing can exceed the utter want of heart in those around me, for every one is watching everybody else. They pay court to me ostensibly in the most extravagant manner, but they hate me at the bottom, because they say I am devoid of the spirit of the order. 'You never have any report to make upon the other fathers,' is the complaint against me. Think you that that is a very grievous charge. Can it be supposed for a moment that a man like me, busied in his studies, and snatching grudgingly a few moments of necessary recreation, for which the time is only too short, can be bothered with spying upon the defects in manner, and talk of those around him? What an ungracious task to discharge. I have plenty to do without such an occupation as that. Oh, how bitterly I regret the free life of a priest outside! God is my record that I would never have disgraced it; but I ought not to have been inveigled into this iron system of wheels within wheels, where ideas, feelings, personal liberty—all are regulated as by clockwork, with a daily precision the eternal monotony of which knows no disturbance. It is death to the soul; it is lingering suicide. Yet what have I been doing? I shall have to confess to my spiritual father the indiscretion of which I have been guilty in making this open admission to you. My God! my God! what indescribable torture! Oh! is not sacred confidence like ours justified by the inward voice of conscience? and yet my vows oblige me to reveal all that I have said to you. Were I to conceal

anything, that very concealment would be sin, and then would come remorse and all the torments it entails. So I must make a clean breast of it, and bury myself again in this chaos of littlenesses which unnerve me as a man, and by no means elevate me as a Christian. Dear Loubère, how I envy you your humble curacy at Lans-le-Bourg! And look you! such is the wretchedness of this unendurable existence, that this moment of unreserved intercourse with you will cost me very dear. I must acknowledge who it is with whom I have had this treasonable conversation. I must repeat all that you have said in order to clear you of any suspicion of having come here to injure the order, and wean me from my connexion with it. Ah, that fatal connexion! How I grieve that I ever listened to the unhappy impulse which brought it about! Happy shall I be if my compulsory confession of what has passed between us in no way injures you, and if my only punishment be the deprivation of your society! Just see, my friend, to what a condition they fall who belong to a society who sets itself up as an universal model. Espionage and tyranny, instead of those glorious evangelical bonds which were designed to unite brothers in the communion of mutual love. But come, at all events, to-morrow or the next day. I do not confess before Saturday, so till then I am free."

Loubère was unable to reply; he grasped the hand of his unhappy friend, and left without a word. He was unable to return before the Friday; nor did he reach the building till ten minutes after the hour named by

De Cambiac. Full of his own thoughts, he threaded hastily the long corridor, thinking of the distressing condition of the poor Jesuit marquis. Reaching the door of the room which he took for his friend's, he found it closed, while that of the adjoining library was open. Loubère was on sufficiently intimate terms to enter without ceremony, as he expected the other to make his appearance every minute. He entered the library, closing the door which led into the gallery, so that no one might see him; ready to open it as soon as De Cambiac returned, and even chuckling at the surprise he would occasion him when he came back and found him ransacking his book-shelves.

He had, however, made a mistake; his friend's room was two or three doors off. He was in the private study of the general of the Jesuits, whose suite of apartments, opening one into another, occupied the centre of the range. Being, like the majority of priests, very fond of books, and fully under the impression that De Cambiac would turn up in a few minutes, he set to work to examine the volumes nearest to his hand. They were spiritual treatises in different languages, very much alike, and bound with great taste, though not in a costly fashion,—or perhaps, to speak more correctly, in a style of simple costliness. He admired the beauty of the editions—the fineness of the morocco, the handsome clasps. Restoring them to their place, he noticed a second row concealed behind them, bound with the same taste, but far more richly. Curiosity is a powerful incentive. Moreover, he was in a friend's room,

and it never occurred to him that he was doing anything incorrect. These books consisted of a collection of the French literature of the day, and the first book in the row, to his great amusement, proved to be one of the romances of Paul de Kock. Loubère himself was not over particular in his reading; still, to discover one of the most lax of French novels, splendidly bound, on the shelves of a Jesuit dignitary, did seem a little extraordinary.

"After all," he said, "Pope Gregory XVI., that furious absolutist, had his moments of quiet indulgence over the pages of this writer, so my dear marquis may well be allowed the same innocent amusement. All the same, I should like to know whether he ever mentions the fact to his spiritual director."

But picture his amazement when, just as he was hastening to replace the volume for fear of being caught in his very questionable inspection, a third row revealed itself, the binding of the most eccentric description, and as utterly unstudied as it is possible to conceive. The title of the first of these books, written on a roll of paper pasted to the back, was *Confessions of the Fathers.* In this roll was an alphabetical list, carefully arranged. His curiosity fully aroused, he opened the mysterious repertory. With an eagerness easily understood, he hunted out his friend's initial. At the same moment, a sudden apprehension darted into his mind.

"Have I not made a mistake?" he said, to himself. "Is it possible that this is not De Cambiac's library?"

He could no longer doubt the truth of the case when

he found, in its proper place, a complete summary of the young Jesuit's confessions. But here we would not exaggerate. It is true that, underneath the confession of each father, their complete description and history had been added; but no particular sin was set down; the seal of confession had not in the least been violated. The Jesuits take good care always to keep everything square with the Almighty; they know how far they think they may go in their hypocrisy to the Most High.

De Cambiac was photographed to the life. His simplicity and geniality; his want of tact and reserve; his very moderate attachment to the order, to which he would never have belonged, had he not been drawn into it; his general disposition; his impression that he was retained among the Jesuits only, according to the register, that they might avail themselves of his numismatic knowledge; his deep and real piety, together with his constant hankering after the unbridled life of a secular priest—all this was set down in a telling and masterly style—the man himself was there.

Meanwhile the time was rapidly slipping away.

"If I am not in De Cambiac's room, where am I?" thought Loubère.

The place was profoundly still; no noise in the next room, any more than in the long corridor which he had just passed through on his way to this fatal door. Prudence and self-preservation suggested to him that he had better leave the place, go straight to the parlour, and inquire openly after his friend. But he was a bold

man; the adventure was exciting: other queer little registers were there, entitled *Confessions of Strangers, Enemies of the Society;* and these attracted him irresistibly.

"Let us see whether they have got poor Julio down amongst the enemies. He is entitled to be there, and no mistake."

He opened the register, and turned to his friend's name. As he had suspected, foremost in the list of deadliest foes was described elaborately his bosom friend.

The list of crimes laid to his charge was complete. It contained the minutest details, such as one could scarcely imagine the acutest spies capable of obtaining. His tastes, his private life, his relations with his sister —even his nocturnal reception of the young Pyreneean girl in the presbytery of St. Aventin.

Loubère—his interest fully aroused, and under the influence of the most feverish curiosity—took little heed of the flying minutes as he devoured this private record. He had got as far as the expedition of the famous Denis, who had been enjoined by the fathers to allure Julio to Rome, when suddenly he heard a noise in the adjoining room. Hastily restoring the books to their proper order, he detected the sound of numerous footsteps, and at length comprehended the full peril of his position.

To be detected in so flagrant a delinquency, and arrested either as a robber or a spy, and to be rewarded for his rash curiosity either with one of the cells of the

Inquisition or with the convict prison of Terracina,—such was the unmistakeable and by no means agreeable prospect that presented itself to his mind. But what could he do? To leave the room abruptly, at the risk of arousing the attention of the fathers, whom he correctly supposed to be assembled in the next room, appeared to him the height of madness.

Instead of evincing that prompt decision which in moments of danger marks resolute spirits like his, he felt an unaccountable terror creeping over him. His knees shook; he stood riveted to the spot, as though by a supernatural spell.

During that terrible crisis, chairs had been brought into the other apartment, and silence immediately ensued. Loubère overheard as distinctly as though he had been in the room the customary Latin invocation to the Holy Spirit, slowly uttered by the weak voice of an old man. Again a fresh sound of chairs being moved; and again a silence.

It was evident that they were assembled in council, and he saw at once that he had the incredible opportunity of being present at the supreme deliberations of that great company, really composed of so small a number of men, but which, by means of its restless ambition, had exercised for three hundred years such a stupendous influence over the Catholic world.

Meanwhile he remained in the most agonizing suspense. There is a fear unlike all other fears. It is but a light thing to be on a field of battle at the cannon's mouth. No sooner has nature recovered its

first nervous surprise, and drunk in excitement from the thundering volleys, than all sense of apprehension vanishes. Bullets do not kill every one; and each reassures himself with the hope that he will escape. The true, terrible, incurable terror is the dread of an unknown peril.

Loubère, under its fullest influence, was completely paralyzed. However, there was nothing for it but to play his part to the end, all unable as he was to adopt any better course, or devise a means of escape from his fearful position.

Leaning his elbows on the table before him, his hands clenched together, his body rigid with dismay, he awaited the issue in a state of stupefaction, like some abject suppliant prostrate at the shrine of a pitiless god.

The discussion had already commenced. His situation made him an attentive listener to all that was going on; and his unnatural excitement caused what he heard to be carved, as it were, into the recesses of his brain.

The old man who had uttered the prayer was evidently the general. He summed up with great clearness in a sort of abstract—which Loubère compared to a President's message to Congress—the position of the order in the five quarters of the globe. The Jesuits were prospering wonderfully in England, in the United States, and in Canada where they were omnipotent, while in Belgium the bishops and the secular clergy were completely in their power.

But in Poland they were even more supreme. There, thanks to the exceptional position of the country writhing under the Russian yoke, their rule was a most thorough reality.

"My instructions," continued the general, "to our brethren in Poland, and I trust you will approve of them, are these. To do everything to keep up those national antipathies which tend so effectually to promote religious enmities. To depict the Russians on all occasions as infidels, as enemies of the Church, as persecutors of the faith, as tyrants against whom any measures are justifiable. I am in constant correspondence with the Polish refugees in Paris, amongst whom are eager longings, which are daily gaining strength, and which the old Czartoriski will have some difficulty in restraining. Here is their political scheme in which they are eager for our help, relying upon our efforts to bring about a religious revolution, when they will emancipate themselves from the Russian yoke. The plan, long matured, communicated even at Paris to many illustrious personages round the French Emperor, with the view of securing his interest in the cause of Poland, is as follows:—Patriotic hymns are to be sung in all the churches. This will disturb the Russians, who will set their police on the move, and call out their troops; the same hymns to be sung in the public places where large gatherings take place. The order to be, never to appear under arms. Should the soldiers receive directions to disperse the people, they are to fall on their knees and present their bosoms to the Cossack's spear. We have

sounded a few of the organs of the press, even of the liberal organs. All favour Poland, and the sympathies of the revolutionists, for the nationalities as they are called, will greatly aid us. The originators of the scheme count on a general cry of reproach and execration against Russia for trampling down unarmed and defenceless multitudes. There will be an enthusiastic shout for the martyr-nation. It will be impossible in that case for Russia to do otherwise than constitute a new kingdom of Poland."

"But Russia is perfectly able to stand out, and carry on a war of extermination against this unhappy nation."

"Quite true; but France will never allow it. She has constituted herself the Don Quixote of the nationalities. She will support Poland, and either she will succeed in her aim, and we along with her, or else she will array a coalition against herself, in which case . . . ."

"In which case?" inquired another of those present.

"In which case, the revolution will be abandoned for some time, and that will be all the better for us. The issues are in the hands of God. Only let us confine ourselves to the part which we have to play in Poland; there is no doubt that the support lent by the clergy to the national movement is attracting to us, more and more, the attachment of that country. Should the evil days we apprehend, overtake us; should we be expelled from the kingdom of Italy, and even from the Papal States; should we be denied a refuge in any of the emancipated countries, as we may very reasonably ap-

prehend, still we shall have a safe asylum among this people so devoted to Catholicism, where we shall be able to re-constitute ourselves, and wait for better days."

And then the general went on to speak at length of the condition of the order in the Roman States.

"Assuming the possibility of the Bourbons being reinstated at Naples, we must promote especially the interests of the Queen-mother. Besides, the young consort, Maria Sophia, of Bavaria, should she recover her influence over the feeble Francis II., would force him into a path of liberal concessions, and inspire him with all that mistrust of our order which she has exhibited here. She will never forgive us for having been supported at Bavaria by Lola Montès, so we must do our best to sow dissensions between the royal pair. Francis II., left to himself, is sure to abdicate in favour of the son of the Queen-mother, and then Naples will be ours. It is idle to avoid seeing that our position here is uncertain in the extreme. The precarious condition of the temporal power shows us pretty plainly what we may expect. Whether the Pope remains at the Vatican, or betakes himself to some one of the Catholic nations, in the hope of rousing their sympathetic aid in favour of his restoration to his dominions, we shall still have to leave Rome. We are hated here, more than the papacy itself. The clergy themselves, exasperated by our ascendancy over them, are our bitter enemies, quite as much as the revolutionists, and will triumph equally in our fall. What care they for it? they will remain. These men, who only know how to baptize and to bury,

have nothing to apprehend from a people devoted to the dry routine of ordinances, and ready to sell the Pope and cardinals at a moment's notice, provided only they keep their Madonna. Moreover, the secular clergy are Italians, and naturally sympathize with the Italian party. We Jesuits have no nationality, our society is our country; we are cosmopolitans, and in that our real strength lies; but still this effectually isolates us from the various nations who look upon us, and causes us to be regarded on all sides as foreigners. Hence the reason why the Italians will keep their priests, while they drive us into an exile which may last for a long, long day."

There was a moment's pause. Then came a debate, or rather, in parliamentary language, a conversation on the critical position of the papacy. One of the fathers ventured an opinion, which was ill-received by the majority.

"Surely it would be as well to sympathize with the revolution?"

"Sint ut sunt aut non sint," said another father. "This resolute motto has saved us, and it will yet save the temporal power. Rome knows how to put down the forward movement by an invincible resistance of all efforts at forcing her to yield. The actual struggle shows her real strength."

"But every human institution must move on," continued the father, who had suggested the conciliatory course.

In a moment hands were flung up and voices raised in indignant protest against the luckless author of this

unwelcome sentiment, no other than De Cambiac, whose voice Loubère had little difficulty in recognizing.

The general resumed.

"The day before yesterday, I had an audience with his Holiness. The worthy Pope, who is not over fond of us, repeated his customary assurances of good-will toward our order; while I, for my part, renewed our assurance of unbounded devotion to his interests. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I am very sure that your most illustrious society is ready to exert itself to an infinite extent for the protection of the papal chair.' I told him I would repeat to you what he had said, and that you would be delighted to hear it. I found him depressed and full of anxious thoughts, failing in health daily. It's a marvel that, with his epileptic fits and diseased leg, he lasts so long. Though we might easily have a Pope more heartily devoted to our interests, he is nevertheless in that position that he can't get on without us, and he knows it. He said to me, shrewdly enough, that experience had taught him to recognize his true friends better than he had hitherto done. The day is far off that will see him attempt to annihilate us by the kind help of Father Theiner; and in common with all the various orders jealous of our ascendancy, he is becoming more tractable. Misfortune is bringing this about.

"As his Holiness happened to be in a talkative vein, he went on to tell me of the demands made by the French ambassador for the liberation from our prisons of a young priest named Julio, who had done us so much mischief in France, and whom we have had the

good fortune to arrest. 'Your Holiness,' I replied, 'would not desire to see that enemy of the Church at large. Priests are everlastingly at the bottom of all kinds of evil in society: what havoc did not Luther and Calvin occasion. The promptitude shown by Gregory XVI. in humbling, by a blow, the pride of Lamennais, arrested in France an explosion as dangerous as the so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century. This Julio is a second Lamennais—more dangerous even than the first. The one was a desperate man, and attacked even his friends; the other is a destroying wolf arrayed in sheep's clothing.'

"My argument appeared to weigh considerably with the Pope. 'Perhaps you are right,' he said. 'At all events, Popes are not in the habit of interfering with the acts of the Holy Office. I will pray to God and the Immaculate Virgin for guidance in the matter.' Thereupon I went forthwith to the cardinal minister, who is thoroughly on our side. You know, fathers, that he would be ungrateful in the extreme were he not: as we have greatly aided him in amassing his enormous fortune—his millions are powerful arguments in our favour. He grasped my hand most cordially, and I told him the particulars of my interview with his Holiness. 'Don't be afraid,' was his reply. 'He won't move in the matter, I'll answer for that; your protégé is safe enough under lock and key.' So we need have no apprehensions on that score."

The eager interest of Loubère all this time never flagged for a moment. However, he couldn't help, from

time to time, casting an eager look on that door so unfortunately closed upon him. Meanwhile, possibly the Jesuit council might reveal to him some still more startling discovery.

"Since I am in for it," he said to himself, "an hour or so more or less won't make much difference. Patience is all I require. I shall manage to get away somehow or other."

His courage was reviving by degrees.

"Bah!" he muttered, at length, "they can't eat me."

"And now for the financial report," continued the general. "Our expenses, as compared with our accumulating revenues, are very limited. It must be allowed that this hateful modern civilization increases capital, at all events; so we could not do otherwise than make our profit out of the greatly enlarged facilities which it affords. Our small savings immediately after our re-establishment, thanks to excellent investments, have realized enormous sums. Lately, money has poured in in heaps. Legacies have been more numerous this year than ever: to such an extent, that, during the last three months, our section at Paris has been able to take up, by my orders, two thousand shares in the Seville-Xeres-Cadiz Company, to the value of a million; two thousand in the South Austrian Lombard Company, at 500 francs a share, value a million; a thousand Saragossan bonds, at 500 francs, value 500,000 francs: making a grand total of 2,500,000 francs.

"There will be in the next six months, unless any unforeseen accidents occur, all the accumulating interest, our other revenues from our Havre and Bordeaux ships, our establishments at San Francisco, our commercial houses, with donations, and recoveries from the sale of estates bequeathed to us. The total of our net profits during the year will exceed six millions."

At this stage, Loubère's anxiety returned with renewed force; it appeared more than probable that the financial statement would close the proceedings. It was a critical moment.

The question was, how to escape?

Should the lock which he would have to attack make any noise; should any one come suddenly upon him and detect him escaping from the private apartment of the general, what an occurrence that would be at the Gèsu! And even if he escaped out of the room unheard, he might be observed in his way down, and the porter be warned. However, that was his only course.

In a state of the greatest possible excitement, as though he were on the eve of committing some desperate crime, and blushing up to the roots of his hair, he stepped across to the door, grasped the handle of the lock, turned it as quietly as possible, and let the bolt slip back gently into its position. Unfortunately, however, the hinges wanted oiling; so the result of opening the door was a creaking sound, which no one could mistake, and which was distinctly audible in the inner room.

"Who can that be in my apartment at this hour?" said the general. "Just go and see who it is," he added, to Father de Cambiac, who happened to be nearest to the door.

He rose and went into the library, perceived that the outer entrance was open, looked through into the long passage, and saw a priest, whom he recognized at once to be Loubère, making off, as rapidly as possible, towards the principal staircase. Greatly amazed, and showing his dismay in his countenance, he returned to the council chamber, and reported that the library-door was half open, but that there was no one there.

In a house so strictly regulated as the Gèsu, this incident of the general's door being half open during a conference, involved all present in suspicion, even the general himself. A general search ensued; they rushed into the corridor, to the evident dismay of poor De Cambiac, whose disturbance was remarked as very suspicious. Next, the interior of the library was examined, but with no result; the corridor was empty. The rooms of the other fathers were explored; but all of them, with the exception of the members of the council, were found quietly occupied with their studies. The lay brothers were next sent for, but the one in charge of the general's apartments—who had left the door open, as it happened, that morning—was not in the building.

At a time when it was necessary to be always on the alert, when the Roman National Assembly—the bitter enemy of the Jesuits—might devise at any moment some deadly plot, an incendiary design for instance, or a

preparation of explosive bombs—the whole inhabitants of the Gèsu were seized with an indescribable panic. The porter, on being questioned, had not noticed anything out of the way. However, on being closely questioned as to whom he had admitted, he stated that no stranger had passed through the gate, except the French priest, who had frequently been there before on a visit to Father de Cambiac, and who, by his special order, was allowed to go straight to his room as often as he came. He had been three hours with him that day. Whereupon, the general summoned Father de Cambiac to tell him at what time the stranger had come to him, and when he left his apartment.

Father de Cambiac declared that he had never seen him the whole day. The porter was summoned again, and mentioned the exact hour at which the French priest had arrived, and gone up the main staircase, for he had seen him with his own eyes, as well as the hour at which he had come down.

What a singular mystery! Could it be possible that Father de Cambiac was plotting against the order to which he belonged. His agitation on his return from the library to the council chamber; the conviction present in every mind by the precision of the porter's declaration, that the strange priest had been there that day, and that he had not been seen going out; the evident falsehood of Father de Cambiac, who must certainly have admitted him; all this complicated state of things, threw the entire establishment into the utmost perplexity. And, as imagination is ever ready to run

wild—even in Jesuit brains—the idea of a plot with Father de Cambiac at its head—who, moreover, had betrayed himself to the council by his two ill-omened expressions of opinion which had so greatly scandalized them—acquired rapid growth. The panic was general, in the midst of which Passaglia's defection rose to the recollection of all.

Once more the secret council assembled. The equivocal conduct of Father de Cambiac was severely reprehended, as being altogether unprecedented in that place. They determined to send him to some one of their far-off establishments to do penance; and that at once. If the father were really guilty, and had betrayed any secret, his departure would arrest the plot. If he were innocent, still his submissive obedience would be a meritorious sacrifice before God.

Such was the summary justice of the secret council.

The next day Loubère ascertained that his friend had left Rome.

CHAPTER VII.

A SMALL MONSIGNOR.

LOUBÈRE felt pretty confident that he was in some way connected with Father de Cambiac's departure from Rome; but to avoid all suspicion, he continued to officiate at the Gèsu. He had a letter of introduction to the Abbé Bertrand, one of those French priests employed to communicate between Rome and the various bishops, and who conduct the business of several dioceses.

The vicar-general of Chambéry had, very obligingly, brought him under the notice of this official, from whom he received a most gracious welcome. Intimately acquainted as he was with all the peculiarities of the Roman prelates, he was calculated to be of considerable service to him in the object he had in view. He introduced him in every quarter; while Loubère, with his candid, straightforward disposition, soon succeeded in acquiring invaluable information bearing upon the execution of his scheme, with reference to which, be it observed, he maintained the strictest secrecy towards the Abbé Bertrand.

Among others, he chanced, more particularly, to meet a junior member of the Papal court, Monsignor Andrea Giusto, a private chamberlain of the Pope, who paid him considerable attention, appearing to be much struck by his simplicity and geniality, and cultivating his acquaintance with that wheedling obsequiousness which is the peculiar characteristic of the degenerate Romans. There could be little doubt that he was a man to be bought. His private reputation was none of the best; in fact, the inferior appointments at the Vatican are by no means carefully made. So it will be no matter of surprise to learn that on one of his visits to Loubère he opened his wide eyes with evident eagerness at the sight of a pile of gold pieces which our friend was amusing himself by counting on the table.

"This is the buona mano," said Loubère, "intended for the man who will help me in the rescue of an unlucky friend of mine."

"Which might easily be accomplished," replied the prelate, at once taking the bait.

"If you undertook it thoroughly, it might certainly be managed."

"Then I will, with all my heart. State the particulars.

"They are very simple—a mere piece of imprudence. A young priest, a most intimate friend of mine, has been silly enough to drop into the clutches of the Holy Office."

"Oh, oh! the Holy Office. A powerful institution that, signor."

"Nonsense. Do you mean to tell me that you fellows, attached to the Pope's person, can't do anything you please? Come now, look at this money; handle it, if you like. Do what I ask, and it is yours."

The Italian cast a greedy look on the golden heap, so carefully piled up, and so bright-looking.

"Are you speaking seriously?" he asked.

"Most unquestionably I am."

"It is a grave matter, you see. I might ruin my future prospects. . . ."

"You're too sharp for that. You know you all understand one another like pickpockets at a fair: you didn't begin yesterday to play the game 'scratch me and I'll scratch you.' What is it that you have to do, after all? Simply to gain over two or three members of the Holy Office. Perhaps one will be enough—a commissioner or an influential councillor. Just bring all your cunning into play, there's plenty of that article on hand here. If you find yourself driven to the most powerful argument, slip one of these coins into their hands. I brought them, I assure you, for that sole purpose. I don't intend taking a single one of them back to Savoy. Must I fling them into the Tiber?"

Fling them into the Tiber! The bare idea of it horrified monsignor.

"These French priests are a parcel of fools," he said to himself; "but they're as self-willed as mules. M. Loubère would be the last man to break his word."

"You shan't fling them into the Tiber," he rejoined.

"Very good, take as many of them as you want, to begin with. You shall have the remainder when you give me back my friend."

"We must gain over a few more of the Vatican prelates."

"Be it so, then. I take you at your word. Will these four heaps be enough?"

And his avaricious acquaintance made a quiet calculation for a moment, with a face of such grave solemnity that it was all Loubère could do to refrain from laughing outright. He was endeavouring to reckon up the number of Roman crowns in the pile placed at his immediate disposal.

"To ensure success, sir," he replied, with a look of profound reflection,—"in fact, to do the thing effectually, I think it would be as well to treble the amount. In that case, I undertake the commission."

"By all means. Here are four more lots, making two-thirds of the sum I have set apart for the purpose."

"You understand that I consent to this agreement, and promise my co-operation in the matter you have at heart, because it is of so laudable a character; otherwise, I would not touch this money, of which not a single coin will stay in my private pocket. Ah! signor abbate, it is so difficult, at present, to succeed in any enterprise at Rome. In days gone by, in the good old time, in the reign of Gregory XVI., all you had to do was to get hold of Gaetanino, who was once his barber, and became his most intimate confidant. The quarter of

this money would have been enough, and more than enough, for the purpose. But that happy state of things has passed away. It is hard enough even to please the Pope, who is very strict; and as to getting a favour out of him, that is harder still. Probably, too, you wouldn't like to leave Rome without being made a knight of some one of the Papal orders? That's not difficult—merely a matter of a few scudi."

"I've no great longing in that direction, believe me."

"That I could certainly manage for you. Look here! I could even get you the Order of St. Gregory the Great or the Golden Spur. Which would you like?"

"We'll settle that by-and-by, if I have any money over that I don't know how to get rid of in any other way."

"Yet it's a sort of thing that's thought a good deal of by the French clergy."

"Oh, as for me, I'm settled for life, and have been long ago."

At this stage of the conversation, monsignor, who was itching with impatient eagerness to clutch the gold, —stretched out his long bony hands, towards the sum allotted to him, lying on the table near Loubère. Then, stealthily grasping it, he slipped it slowly into his pocket, made a low obeisance, and withdrew.

"I shall soon hear from you?" said Loubère.

"On the earliest possible day, signor abbate."

CHAPTER VIII.

CARDINAL ANTONELLI.

CARDINAL ANTONELLI has been greatly calumniated in Europe. He is the flower of the Sacred College; a thorough Parisian, polished in his manners, appearing as a young man still, a character which suits him well. As he enters the Vatican, to have his customary audience, in his fashionable attire, rather tight-fitting round the waist like a cavalry officer's, it is easy to see that there is probably a great destiny in store for him. In this guise he shows himself as prime minister, but without an atom of pride. He is a pleasant man to talk to—though he has a habit of concealing his real thoughts under the veil of elaborate diplomatic phraseology, expressed, be it told to his credit, in the very best French. In his bearing, he is courteous in the extreme. As you quit his presence, it is difficult to realise that you have been speaking to the chief of an obstinate reactionary Government. You rub your eyes, to make sure that you are positively in the Vatican, and not in the audience room of the minister of a free con-

stitutional kingdom. We may add in his praise, that he would be as zealous a public servant to a State in advanced liberalism.

He is one of those men that surrender their services to a political system with all the faithfulness they would exhibit in attaching themselves to the cause of a friend. His defence of the temporal power is offered in the most thorough good faith, and with a chivalrous grace and disinterestedness well calculated to disarm his bitterest opponents. He is the superintendent of a wealthy house, all whose private feelings and aims are absorbed in the desire for its aggrandisement. The "non-possumus" is an utterance in which he intensely believes. Yet, clever as he is, he is not a genius. As to what is passing in the religious world, he is as ignorant as an old woman. The religious press of Paris is everlastingly startling his propriety, and hardening him in his antagonistic policy, as it has the Pope, the cardinals, a great majority of the bishops, ditto of the priests, as well as a considerable section of serious laics. He is undoubtedly a good man, and his real creed is right, yet for the moment he will swear, immovably, by the Gospel according to Veuillot, as it is expounded to him day after day, with amazing precision and rare polemical suavity, by illustrious doctors, among the ablest of whom we may mention Coquille and Taconnet.

Fortified by their teaching, he is firmly convinced that his resolute opposition to any attack on the tiara is an effectual checkmate to European diplomacy. His "No," he thinks, will be the admiration of posterity;

while the glory of Antonelli, the cardinal minister, will shine through ages yet unborn.

But this in no way interferes with the fact that he has managed to make hay while the sun shines, in sage anticipation of possible rain. A few fair millions will secure him an easy competence, no matter where, and leave him free from all self-reproach as to his present management of his share of the revenues of the purple.

Such is a sketch of the man with whom France negotiates in all matters relating to international politics.

Julio's imprisonment had created a great stir. One of the principal and best-informed Brussels journals had given a full account of the extraordinary kidnapping of his sister, the romantic story of the convent burglary, with the melancholy wind-up of the drama in the dungeons of the Holy Office.

So Louise found ready sympathy on her arrival at Paris. Her beauty, youth, and misfortunes pleaded eloquently with many a gray-headed official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She found no difficulty even in securing the ardent sympathy of the Minister himself. Indeed, interest in the captive was aroused in the highest quarters. The French ambassador received a diplomatic note, enjoining him to leave no stone unturned to effect the abbé's deliverance.

Thus instructed, he lost no time in sounding Cardinal Antonelli. He enlarged on the sympathy which was felt for the prisoner in France; of the influential protection which had been extended to his sister at Paris; and of the good effect which his release would accom-

plish. In short, the wording of the application was a triumph of diplomatic skill.

The cardinal heard him through.

"It is simply impossible, M. l'Ambassadeur," he replied, "simply impossible. You seem to forget that of all Roman Orders, the one involved in the present case admits of no dictation — no, not from a minister like me, an ambassador like you, an emperor like your august master, nor even from his Holiness himself. We have no desire to alter this state of things, least of all, to make a change in the Holy Office. *Nihil innovandum.* On the return of the Pope from Gaeta two courses were open—either to introduce a thorough revolution, or to resume quietly the old regime. The latter appeared to be the more logical, and so it was adopted. Hence, our absolute adherence to precedent. Between ourselves, the holy Inquisition, co-extensive with Catholicism itself, denounces modern civilization. Yet it is a main support of the ecclesiastical arch—upset it, and the result is a general overthrow. We must not forget that we are in a kingdom of priests. Any crime affecting religious interests ought necessarily to meet with condign punishment at our hands. The Holy Office terrifies—nothing more. Its bark is worse than its bite."

"And yet, your eminence, it can lay hold of victims, and that for no great faults either."

"No great faults! Do you call it nothiug to violate a cloister? Do you make so little of such an audacious sacrilege in a consecrated building?"

"It was committed in behalf of his sister, and to accomplish her rescue from Forcassi, where she had been kept against her will."

"Then he should have appealed to the civil powers."

"And do you think he would have succeeded in that way, your eminence?"

"Possibly. I admit, however," he added, with a smile, "that he would have had to wait a little."

"Then, don't blame him for having adopted a more expeditious course—even granting that it is illegal."

"I don't blame him at all, I assure you. I understand his motive and feeling perfectly. But the Holy Office doesn't. And if you destroy the terrors which it inspires, do you imagine that our thousands of religious houses, scattered over Italy, would be safe for a moment? Banditti, who have no respect for the best guarded, wealthy mansion, shrink from entering the convent gate. To cross that threshold is the very worst profanation; and the Inquisition, with the dismay it creates wherever it is named, exercises a protecting power which no laws could extend. The idea of rotting in its cells, of being damned here and hereafter, stops the ruffian, shields the convent, and is a perpetual safeguard against every description of sacrilege. We would do anything else your Government might ask; but this we cannot do. The restoration of the little Mortara was much simpler, and yet, to accomplish that, it was necessary to stultify the proceedings of our civil and religious legislature—a thing which a government is always averse to doing."

The ambassador saw that it was useless to press the matter further.

Meanwhile, a communication from Louise, dated Paris, informed Loubère of the great success she had had, and of the aid which had been promised her through the French representative at the Papal court.

He made vain efforts to see Julio, that he might, at least, give him his sister's letter. Strict orders—issued more strictly in this special case—forbade any admissions to the cell.

He next went in quest of the prelate, who had not turned up in any way since his disappearance with the gold. At first Loubère was very patient. However, as the time slipped by without any sign of matters being in train in that quarter, he determined to pay him a visit. He was received almost haughtily, and greeted with "We shall see. I'm very sanguine;" and at every subsequent interview the answer was the same.

"Nice, that," thought he to himself, "I'm fleeced. I see the golden key can't open every door in Rome. Oh, my fine chap, I'll make you smart for this!"

He resolved on taking more energetic measures. One fine morning, when everybody else was fast asleep in bed he knocked at the prelate's door, and told the concièrge that he must see him on urgent business.

She got up in a hurry, put on her dressing-gown, and admitted him forthwith.

"So, so," said the stout Pyreneean, in a tone of voice that had a strange significance,—"it's time we settled this affair. Either you set to work in earnest, or return

my money, Monsignor de Giusto. Do you understand me?"

The poor wretch, little used to this peremptory style, trembled as he stood before him.

"He abuses his position," he said to himself. "Ah, if it were not for that vile army of occupation, wouldn't I pop him into a dungeon alongside of his friend! But it is a dangerous thing to lay hands on a Frenchman. It is necessary to have a proved offence, as in the case of the Abbé Julio."

"M. l'Abbé," he said, in a whining tone, "I have done my utmost, I assure you. If you only knew the pains I have taken, the efforts I have made in your behalf! Stay, I'll give you a proof of my zeal. I am in a position, by means of your money—understand me clearly—to repeat to you all that passed between Cardinal Antonelli and the French ambassador on this subject."

And he detailed the whole conversation recorded above.

Loubère calmed down. It is true that Pyreneans are hasty, but they are also very generous. The wretched prelate was more dead than alive. However, he joyfully marked the alteration in the other's tone and manner.

"Good heavens! that's dreadful. And you think there is no other prospect of success?"

"Only to intercede with the Pope, which I mean to do, I assure you, with all possible despatch; but give me a little time."

"Very good. I will be back in a week."

And as he retraced his steps, in a despondent frame of mind, the idea occurred to him that he would visit the scene of Julio's exploit, which Louise had so touchingly described to him.

"I'll set off for Forcassi," he said, to himself. "That will compel me to leave this man in peace for a time."

The next day he buried himself in a corner of the Viterba diligence, and in due course arrived at Vetrala.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SMUGGLER.

LOUBÈRE devoted a whole hour to our Lady of Forcassi. He saw the black statue, the wardrobe, the pictures, the carved cloister rail, which had been restored with as little delay as possible, and which, in spite of the careful effort of the artist to make the new woodwork as like the old as he could, showed very plainly where the breakage had been effected.

He was greatly interested in everything around him; and pictured his friend grasping the venerable grating, and crying out in his excitement, "My sister!—my sister! Give me my sister!"

It fell in with his arrangements to occupy the week's grace he had given Giusto, in visiting the neighbourhood of the Lake of Bolsena, and the large Etruscan towns between Viterba and Corneto, returning to Rome by the Civita Vecchia railway. On quitting Forcassi, he resolved to go and pay Jacomo a visit.

Louise had so thoroughly described the brave man's abode, that he had very little difficulty in finding out the small white house. The smuggler was at home.

They were soon intimate; for nothing developes intimacy like community of interest and warm attachment to the same friend.

"Jacomo, you are a courageous fellow: I feel as grateful for your conduct as if you had saved my life, instead of that charming girl's."

"And how about her poor brother?"

"Ah!—you know where he is?"

"In the devil's clutches."

"Worse than that: you can come round the devil, by selling yourself to him."

And Loubère described the efforts which had been already made, and their utter failure.

Jacomo looked very grave.

"So the ambassador of the Emperor of the French has been to the Pope, and failed."

"Yes."

"H'm!—looks bad, that. Yet, but for the French, the Pope would have to pack up his tiara."

"Exactly so. Only he doesn't care to overrate the service in our eyes. My small prelate, too, has had no better success than the ambassador."

"I see. Kept your gold, though—hasn't he?"

"I should think so."

"If I only had a quarter of the sum . . . ."

"Don't speak of it. Here's plenty more."

And producing a roll of twenty-franc pieces, he tore off the paper, and turned out on the smuggler's table gold coins to the amount of one thousand francs. Such a heap had never been in that house before.

"Take back your money," said Jacomo; "I have been well paid already by the young lady, while I feel I have only done half my work. We must rescue her brother."

"Any way of effecting that?"

"We can only try;—Jacomo is not fond of boasting. But since his excellency the French ambassador has failed, it is high time I interfered, as it is out of the question to leave the poor dear fellow in that vile hole. I only saw him for a few hours, but I can't tell you how I was taken with him;—why, I love him like my own child. He shall be out before another week; only I can't act alone: so you must give me your sympathy and help. Here, take up that gold, we shall want it at Rome. Good-by, wife. Pray the Holy Virgin to bless our enterprise; it is full of peril, but it is very glorious."

Loubère and Jacomo set out for Civita Vecchia. The same night they reached Rome.

CHAPTER X.

PIUS IX. AND THE OUTBREAK AT ROME.

VERY prominent is the position occupied by Pius IX. in the religious history of the present day. It will be the singular fortune of Mastai to have entered on his pontificate amid the shouts of liberals and the anathemas of the clerical faction, and to leave it with this twofold expression of sentiment exactly reversed. The very men who are shouting at this moment, "Long live the Pope-King, the immortal Pius IX.!" are the same that in 1847 declared that "the choice of Mastai was the worst that could have been made,—that he was a revolutionary Pope."

The question arises, how is this change of sentiment to be explained? Was Mastai an absolutist in liberal clothing, or is he now a liberal in absolutist clothing,—a mere truckler to the pardonable desire to live at peace with his cardinals and bishops, so completely steeped in ultramontanism? Nothing of the sort. The truth is, he is naturally a moderate man; but, alarmed at the slippery paths along which royal reformers are being drawn in their pursuit of liberty, he is taking refuge

in the temporary shelter of opposition—like a mariner huddled up under a rock, but whom the swell, as it rolls by, will soon whirl out into the midst of the breakers.

Pius IX. has had the fate of Louis XVI.—without the scaffold. Like him, a man of good intention, distressed at the evils engendered by the previous reign, it was not surprising that he should introduce a system of government calculated, in some measure, to do away with them. He found affairs in such utter confusion that the authorities could not even furnish him with a list, much less with particulars, of the prisoners in the Roman dungeons. So, in order to clear out these Augean stables effectually, he had to publish a general amnesty, embracing alike bandits, assassins, and political offenders.

A characteristic incident in the opening measures of his reign was his administering the blessed sacrament with his own hands to all these victims of the old *régime*, to the great horror of the Jesuits and cardinals.

Beyond all doubt, he is very superior to those around him. It is difficult to imagine the want of mental vigour in that Roman prelacy which forms what Italians call the Curia. It could not but happen that generation after generation, brought up in studies strictly limited to a certain modicum of theology, must eventually of necessity reach the lowest depths of intellectual degradation.

Under the tight rein of the blameless occupant of the chair of St. Peter, the traditional laxity of the

Roman prelates has become less conspicuous. Up to the time of the arrival of the army of occupation, these illustrious dignitaries were the heroes of endless flirtations. But, on the appearance of the epaulettes, monsignor was quietly put aside; the military lover superseded the ecclesiastical, who was driven into ignominious retirement by the more lucky conquering heroes.

Whatever be the prospects of the Papacy a few years hence—whether some diplomatic compromise is effected, involving no leading question, but postponing the final adjustment to a future day, like worn-out clothes clung to with affectionate pertinacity till they are unable to hold together—or whether the prayer of Italy will be heard, and Rome given her for a capital—this grand issue, which fifteen years ago we little thought to be so near, is actually an accomplished fact. Pius IX. is king only by the grace of Napoleon's legions, and illustrates in his own person the absurdity of the notion that the spiritual power cannot exist without the temporal—a notion which, though it is not asserted as a dogma by the cardinals and bishops, is so put forth as that the opposite creed is condemned as heresy. Yet here we have had a Pope for fourteen years exercising his full spiritual rights, decreeing doctrines, holding consistories, issuing encyclical letters; yet maintained in his political position all the while by an army of occupation, on whose good pleasure his honorary kingship depends; this vassalage, however, in no way impairing his other rule.

So the experiment has been tried; and should Victor Emmanuel once come to the Quirinal, no matter what the form of government at Rome, the spiritual ascendancy of the Pope would remain the same.

The tardiness of the French Emperor in settling a question which he alone has it in his power to adjust, has long irritated the political world. His delay has weakened his popularity; yet, though he knows this, he has not hastened his measures, probably from an appreciation of the full force of the "Deus ex machinâ" rule. Dilatory because he sees ths full value of delay, as much in the interests of his own government as for the purpose of realizing gradually a crisis which, were it to be consummated at a blow, would prove too overwhelming—his hesitation is prudent. All great events in the world's history have been thus brought about.

When an old oak branch, dried up by long winters, after having been for some time stripped of its foliage and bark, and invaded by myriads of insects, is attacked by the winds, it does not fall at once: first comes a last decay, a last giving way, ere the storm gathers its forces from the horizon, and stretches it on the plain.

Just so will it be with the temporal power. Napoleon III. will spare it the humiliation of a sudden crash. No scaffold, prison, or exile for the Pope. There will come a day when Pius IX., or his successor, will find that his tiara has lost two of its circlets, that the Pontifical rim alone remains. Such is the issue which the great arbiter of the Roman future has called the "solution of Providence."

Till this final day, of which few take note, the Papacy will prolong an obnoxious and wearisome existence during the long interval of an intermediate regimen, designed to accustom it by degrees to the coming change. Nothing is more common than for a visitor at Rome to see the Pope at some public ceremony, or possibly at a church, hospital, or convent, weeping bitterly. The last of the priest-kings seems to feel all the burdensomeness of the stately solitude that girds a crowned head, whether that crown be hereditary or elective.

Loubère, though by no means given to tears, as a rule, —was deeply affected on seeing the Pope, one day, coming out of the Church of the Trinità del Monte, and getting into his carriage. A few mounted riflemen, in faded and tattered blue uniforms, were in front. The carriage itself was neither simple, as might suit the profession of a Christian priest, nor yet gorgeous and grand, like that of a mighty monarch. Loubère felt deeply these marks of evident decay. "Poor king!" he thought, as he looked at the spectacle.

But when the form of the victim of the priesthood appeared at the church-door, with the gentle, loving eyes—the eyelids red with weeping and still dropping tears — the hand raised in serene though sorrowful majesty, to bless the few who happened to be gathered round,—the unpolished Pyreneean instinctively fell on his knees to receive the benediction from the all but broken-hearted potentate.

Some fellows were staring with a passionless expres-

sion while this touching scene was being presented. Of little account to them was the blessing of a weeping sovereign. They knelt, because they had been accustomed to do so, and rose, laughing.

"Vulgar wretches!" he muttered, almost aloud. "And yet," he went on to reflect, "this royalty is virtually lifeless. All they see is the carriage and riflemen. They are silent to the king. But when, from the balcony of St. Peter's, the Pope, with his sweet ringing voice, makes the "Benedicat vos" distinctly audible among the masses beneath, these very men would bow lower than I should. There they recognize the vicar of Christ; while here, their icy nonchalance is due to the difference in the element presented."

There was a good reason for the Pope's emotion that day. He had heard from his secret police that a great national demonstration was to take place the next morning at the instigation of the National Committee; that that time would probably be the last in which he would be able to call himself a crowned king,—a dignity which he valued little for himself, but which he felt it incumbent upon him to hand down to his successors.

Disturbances in Rome are unlike disturbances anywhere else, such as the present age has multiplied before us. They bear the mild designation of manifestations. At Paris, the gun and bayonet are in full force; at Rome, things are managed in a very different manner. Its movements are strictly prudent, and in submission to the authority of the Committee. Should they find

it necessary or expedient to rouse the popular sentiment and sound the views of the Pontifical Government on any pressing question; or, again, to ascertain the attitude the French general is likely to take in certain contingencies, the note is given, "To the Corso!" which means, "After the gendarmes; use your blades with prudence; cry, 'Down with the Pope!' but don't go any further. The hour for the final blow is not yet."

The outbreak of the 2nd February, 1861, will not soon be forgotten. The great anxiety then was to know what might be France's intention: it was notorious that the French ambassador was favourable to Italian unity.

"We are very weak and inactive," said one of the most ardent members of the Committee. "We seem to be expecting our partridges to fall down roasted from the trees. The policy of the Emperor is to affect to protect the Pope; but if we were to overpower our Government, after a few French shots fired for the look of the thing, we should be left to ourselves, and the longing of years would be accomplished."

This wise counsel had been followed. The plan was—to study the attitude of the general in command of the troops; to see if, in case of a revolution, he would take a course decidedly hostile to the national party, or whether he would yield to gentle pressure, and leave the Romans to their own devices.

Jacomo was two days' journey from Rome at the time that this storm was brewing. To judge by appear-

ances, a revolution was close at hand: such, at least, was the upshot of the secret report presented to the Pope.

Loubère seeing the city in its repose, dreamt little of coming disturbance. A Roman who knew all that was going to happen, who was to act a conspicuous part in the approaching manifestation, and with whom he had spent two hours that morning, never breathed a word of it.

They met on the Place d'Espagne.

"Any news?" he asked Loubère.

"No," was the reply, "except that I have just seen the Pope cry."

"And well he may."

Loubère did not understand him; the reader will guess at once who he was.

Jacomo, an old soldier of Garibaldi, a smuggler with a strong sinewy arm, and steadfast anti-papal heart, was too valuable to be overlooked. An agent of the Committee met him.

"Jacomo, we shall want you to-morrow."

"Very well, signor."

He had first received a few paolis to drink to the downfall of the Pope-King, and then his commission, with the quiet ease of a man who was always ready.

"Now attend," resumed Jacomo; "I am thoroughly at your service; but I must have some men at my disposal, to break open the Inquisition cells, and let out a brave friend or two, to swell our hosts."

"As far as that goes, it will be a capital diversion."

To avoid suspicion and to secure to himself the power to go about the town without danger, canvassing his friends, and feeling generally the popular pulse, the agent of the Committee went to the police to tell them that a blow was about to be struck.

"We know that," was the reply.

"I heard something about an intended attack on the prisons."

"Thank you; much obliged."

This little farce played, the agent might safely proclaim his wishes under the whole heaven, without the pontifical spies ever dreaming of watching his proceedings. No fear from a man who had put the government on its guard.

On the 2nd of February, exactly at the hour named by the Committee, a compact body of men, dressed in the old national style, took up their position in the Campo Vaccino, the approaches to the Coliseum, the Place Navone, the Corso, the Place del Popolo, and every other quarter of general concourse.

The police on this side had made various arrangements for a probable fight. Often intimate friends are arrayed on opposite sides in these struggles, and the singular interchange may be heard of one, in perfect good humour, crying out to the other, as though he were referring to some engagement connected with a pleasure party,—

"We shall meet to-morrow;" and receiving for answer,—

"Yes, I am going to put an edge on my sword."

CHAPTER XI.

ROMAN BEGGARS.

"WHERE are you going, Pietro?"

"To the Corso; there's something up."

"And what have you got to do with it, you fool?"

"I—why I'm a patriot; I've only rags to show; but I fancy I'm a Roman for all that."

"Well, what next?"

"What next? I am going to hear what my betters have got to say. They are sick of being priest-ridden, and want to get rid of monsignori. Every one in his place; priests in churches, men of the world in the government offices."

"What a jolly yarn, my boy; I never heard anything of the kind in my day; but I don't understand it, so speak out. You want to kick out Pope, monks, and priests; is that it?"

"Not in the least, governor."

"Why, can't you see that that's what they're pushing at?"

"No, because it ain't."

"Get along with your madonna mia; why, you are soft, Pietro. You are working your own destruction, and of those belonging to you, and leaving your father in his old age."

"I don't see it . . . for these . . ."

"Yes, you are; you'll go and shout, 'Long live the Pope.'"

"No, I won't!"

"Poor fool! just listen here. Who is it that gives you your liberty, uncontrolled, and with all its blessings? isn't it the Pope?"

"Well, I go in for a proper government; it would be more the sort of thing for the country."

"Do you? Don't you see that the real king of Rome is not the Pope, but the beggar? You smile; but I repeat, the beggar in his dirty, tattered, old grey coat. You and I are the true kings in this place, which clever chaps are funny enough to call the Eternal City. We rule in the public squares, in the streets, at the palace doors, in the church porch. We live there, sleep there, and enjoy that delicious liberty which nobles never find in their grand drawing-rooms. Where'll you get all this when a French police gets the upper hand here?"

"I only wish that French ways were all the go here!"

"You don't know what you're talking about; any one might see that you've never been in the fine French cities; no beggars are allowed there; a huge placard,

stuck on a post at the entrance of the town has this pleasant inscriptino,—begging is forbidden."

"Is it? so much the better. That'll make young chaps work, and I've no doubt there are plenty of asylums for the old and infirm."

"My dear boy, your head is turned. Yes, there are asylums—prisons!"

"What a cram!"

"Yes, prisons; since, when once you get in there —and that's no easy matter—you never get out. It's good-by then to sun and air, and free access to places you used to haunt; to the land of your birth, and where you played as a child. It's good-by to life, Signor Pietro, for liberty is life. To be free, without a good dinner to trust to, is better than to be caged up with regulation diet, and gratings in front of you, like wild-beast cages. At least, so say I."

"Say it and welcome, then—good-by."

"Stop; one word more."

"Well?"

"You are getting to like work, are you?"

"Not I; but I'll put up with it; it's better than to be always stretching out your hand, and filling your porringer with convent soup."

"What a notion! What's there humiliating in that? Aren't monks beggars, as much as we? Don't they go about to houses, asking alms? Why, these monks elevate us. In stooping to our ways, they raise us to their level, and many a monk has been a Pope. Begging

in them has reached the chair of St. Peter. And that's something to brag of."

"Thank ye, for the honour. What I find is, that a workman is respected, and a beggar despised. Do these begging monks you talk of, find a very warm greeting? Why, they only get what they ask, as a matter of course, often because people can't help giving, because they don't like to be marked out for abuse. I know that, I do."

"You'll break your father's heart, if you keep in your present mind."

"Don't take on in that way, I'll support you when I'm a man. Good-by; wait patiently. See this blade—sharp, isn't it? The Pope's guard had better look to themselves."

"Oh, you wretched boy! but, Pietro, listen once more."

"What is it, father? I'm in a hurry."

"You've some reason you haven't told me, for going and mixing yourself up with that row, where there's nothing for our sort to get, but blows. Come, my lad, make a clean breast of it to your father."

"Well, then, if you must know, I'm in love with Marino, the sculptor's daughter."

"Then marry her."

"She wouldn't marry a beggar."

"But you're rich; richer than her father. I get more by begging than he does by making images, which he can't make any one buy. I have a few golden crowns put by, which I'll give you, if you'll only keep on in the old way."

"Not I; I'd rather work with Giulleta's father. I am going to learn his trade, but in the meantime I'll have a dash in for national independence. Hurrah for united Italy!"

"Then go, and be blowed to you!"

CHAPTER XII.

A REAL SIEGE.

WHILE the demonstration, set on foot by the National Committee, was throwing Rome into the greatest possible excitement, making the Papal troops collect in the public places, while detachments of them occupied the entrance to the principal streets,—the army of occupation, called out by the commander-in-chief, arrived with a promptitude and good order unknown to the other force, and interposed between the Pope's soldiers, as they rushed wildly to the rescue, and the excited people who were making the air ring with their patriotic shouts. It took some time to effect this movement, but when accomplished it was thoroughly successful. The imperial force marched leisurely up; officers, non-commissioned officers and privates, requested the Romans, with genuine French politeness, to spare them the trouble of using their bayonets. The disorganized multitude, which, as usual, had greatly exaggerated its strength, gradually retreated. The Pontifical gendarmes arrested some of the more stubborn. The fact was, they had over-estimated French

moderation, and made no secret of their disgust at finding out their mistake. The patriots, for their part, had been driven to despair, by being unable to make a single prisoner; so that there was a tragic and comic element combined in the affair. The National Committee had been informed that the French army had received very stringent orders as to the severity of the measures they might be called upon to adopt; that these would be merely formal, if the hub-bub were suppressed, but that in the event of a revolution being attempted, they would be executed without the slightest mercy.

All this was happening at the principal spot where the eager masses had collected. A row is a perfect treat to some; costly, perhaps, but that's not much thought of when each man is called upon to take part in it himself.

The French troops had extended their line and taken up a position in formidable array, from the Place del Popolo to the Coliseum; thus occupying the great central thoroughfare, and commanding, as a matter of course, the *champ de bataille.*

Every possible contingency in the more deserted parts had been fully anticipated and provided for. However, the police had orders to double the prison guard.

Jacomo, being a skilful hand at manœuvring, had formed his plans. As the men, whom he had applied for, reached the prescribed place, he took them aside into an empty room, gave them copious draughts of

wine, at Loubère's expense; and, as soon as his little army, of thirty strong, had reached the necessary pitch of enthusiasm, he provided them with arms, and then, placing himself at their head, led them to the prison of the Inquisition.

The first engagement was terrible. The police, warned of what was intended, had placed the double guard in ambush. A few fell on either side at the first fire; but the enthusiasm of Jacomo's troop carried them on. Moreover, they had been well plied with drink. As soon, however, as they discovered their enemy's vast strength their courage failed. The first door had been broken in. Meanwhile, Jacomo's men sprang upon the guard with such force that the officer in command retreated behind the second door, thinking to spare himself and his men needless bloodshed, when, suddenly, a troop of the French army appeared round the corner of the long street in front of the jail. Jacomo, all the while, was ready for the reverse, and made a sign to the others, who fled away by several winding streets unknown to the French; so that the great majority escaped being made prisoners.

Jacomo, covered with blood and powder, concealed himself for a few days. As soon, however, as he felt it to be safe, he sallied forth in search of Loubère."

"You can't think what a terrible state I have been in about you," said the abbé. "I came to the conclusion that the gendarmes had got hold of you, and went to ascertain whether it was so or not. I knew a terrible struggle had taken place at the Inquisition, and jumped

at once to the conclusion that you had been killed. I was almost tempted to curse Providence for having taken away another of Julio's best friends. But here you are, after all, alive and well. Thank God, I find you so. I am full of hope for the future."

"It's these wretched countrymen of yours that have spoilt everything. What a splendid expedition it was. I shall be proud of it as long as I live. How I did head it! A general couldn't have managed a hundred men better. But what do you want now? There's nothing more to be done——"

"Nothing more, Jacomo! Why, we haven't tried every plan within our reach. You are not done for yet."

"I done for!—oh, no. I have still blood left in my veins and ideas in my head. Have you any more gold left?"

"Not much."

"We must risk everything we have. Come—it won't do to be down-hearted—we must pluck up our spirits. I'll contrive something."

"Bravo, Jacomo, you're a splendid fellow."

CHAPTER XIII.

OSTERIA DELLA SABINA.

It was the 10th of October, 1861. Three stout, strong men, with a resolute, military air, in the dress of Roman peasants, were devouring, by the pale light of a lamp, an oleaginous and inodorous repast. The place was Osteria della Sabina, an inn patronized by priests on their way to Rome, by smugglers and professional beggars, and suspected characters ready for any work that might turn up. The mean-looking house had only one door opening into an irregular space on the left bank of the Tiber, near that gem of miniature architecture, the Temple of Vesta. The ground-floor consisted of a large dark room reeking with smoke, a few adjoining apartments, a kitchen and cellars. Upstairs were twelve repulsive-looking bed-rooms, separated by a gloomy, filthy corridor. At certain times, when the house was thronged with a large influx of peasants from the mountains, these rooms assumed the appearance of human ant-hills. Ten or twelve men would sleep huddled up together on straw palliasses and mattresses; two wretched beds, the curtains of which were of

the remotest date, forming the only furniture on the spot. The landlady was Signora Giustina, an old woman with immense hips, a square head, and large, but fine features, shrivelled up by age, hard work, and severe privations. She had only one son, whom she had enlisted in the national army. On the day that the city was taken, he was brought home—a corpse.

Her house was perfectly safe. Inside its walls you might say anything you pleased. Conspiracies against the Papal Government, abductions, highway robberies, and outrages of every description, were concocted at her long table. Giustina was a sort of mother to her very questionable guests. Had she once betrayed her trust, her inn would have been forsaken. She was on the best of terms with the police, whom she secretly bribed with a small annual offering, which she dignified as "buona mano," and which the agents shared among themselves. She was also very liberal to the Capuchins and other beggars. She had a Madonna in a recess, at one of the corners of her house, which she dressed with lavish splendour, and before which there was always to be seen a lighted lamp. Moreover, she never failed to keep Easter with all due observance.

"Very good," said one of the three alluded to above, and who appeared to be a sort of captain over the others, "you are not the sort of men to draw back."

"Not we, signor."

"Here are five hundred scudi."

"Agreed."

"Remember, it's a dangerous undertaking."

"Who cares?"

"We shall have to climb a high wall."

"We could climb the lower regions, if that's all."

"And perhaps be shot at."

"Used to that."

"Then it's all settled."

"Most certainly. We're men, and that's enough."

"Then I'll be ready for you in a minute." I shall bring a rope-ladder and revolver, with plenty of barrels, for each of us. If they attack us, no matter whence it comes, fire and kill as many as you can. It's a rescue we're after; and four horses will wait. We're not going, mind, to the end of the world. We shall have to travel all night to cross Subiaco, and set down our charge on the other side of the frontier—at Rocca-San-Stephano, beyond the reach of the sbirri. But then think of the five hundred scudi. You'll get them here, to-morrow, at this hour. I'll leave them with Signora Giustina, for the purpose. Come on."

And dashing down the scudi on the table, he arranged them in five heaps, and handed them over to the care of the landlady.

"Here, lock them up for us till to-morrow evening, and have a good supper ready at that time."

The eyes of the two men shone with unnatural lustre under their dark eyebrows. They went to have a few hours' sleep, enjoining Giustina to wake them at a given hour.

About half-past twelve, they reached a quiet street at the extremity of one of the most deserted districts of

Rome. It was a terrible night. The rain was deluging the Eternal City, and a furious east wind was blowing. The men, wrapping their cloaks round them, walked on some way without speaking, and then paused under a long wall of great height. Their leader took a small lantern, rendered necessary by the almost impenetrable darkness, and unrolled a rope ladder, the end of which he flung on the top of the wall, where it hooked itself firmly. In a moment he was up, followed by one of the others. Once safe on the other side, he made for a certain door, feeling his way with his hands, in preference to using his dark lantern. Reaching the spot in question, a low massive door-way, he drew a bundle of keys from his waist, and tried the lock.

But there was some hitch, as the key got twisted inside and wouldn't turn. A full minute was consumed in pulling it out before another could be tried, which was not done without shaking the door and making some noise; then, more were experimented upon, but to no purpose. At length a skeleton key did the business, the bolt flew back with an unavoidable noise. The heavy door groaned on its hinges. The prisoner, who had awoke from a deep sleep at the first sound of disturbance, sprang to his feet.

"Follow me," said Jacomo; "you are free. You have only to come with me to the wall, where you'll find a rope ladder. There is a man waiting in the street. But not a syllable, for God's sake."

Julio left his cell, grasping his deliverer's hand. Soon he reached the place, and scaled the wall, followed by

the man. As soon as Jacomo was satisfied that the two were safely over, he prepared to climb up after them. He had hardly mounted a few feet, however, when he heard a terrible shout, and felt an iron hand grasping him round the ankles. It was the jailor, who was raising frantic shouts for help. The sentry hearing the outcry, rang an alarm-bell, and the soldiers, who had been asleep in the guard-room, turned out in a moment, with lighted torches. In the meantime, two men were struggling in the darkness. Jacomo had seized the jailor by the throat, and all but strangled him, when the man drew a poniard from his waist, and stretched the brave fellow a corpse at his feet.

At that moment the guard came up. By the light of their torches, the jailor recognized in the pale features of the dead Jacomo, his neighbour at Vetrala.

As for Julio, pushed up by a strong hand, he fell, more dead than alive, at the bottom of the wall, on the other side.

PART VII.

THE GRAND STAGE AND THE GRAND STRUGGLE.

CHAPTER I.

LOUISE AT PARIS.

THE escape of Louise from the delightful retreat of the Benedictine ladies of Notre Dame di Forcassi had greatly astonished the Jesuits. Who would have thought that any one could have found her out in that sweet seclusion, with smugglers and bandits blossoming in all the country round. How in the world did the Abbé Denis manage to miss his man? How came it that he didn't arrest him, with the delegate's help, on his appearance at Viterba, it being more than possible that he had obtained possession of the secret of her whereabouts. Nothing more ordinary or simple than such a proceeding; nothing easier in a country where the liberty of the subject is a thing unknown.

The Jesuits were beside themselves with rage, fully realizing the serious consequences which might result to the Order from the spreading of the tidings through Europe that they had perpetrated an act of kidnapping; more especially, too, at a time when the French tribunals were making discoveries in reference to similar

occurrences, not greatly to the credit of the regular clergy.

What they naturally dreaded most was a description from the lips of Mademoiselle de la Clavière herself, in circles peculiarly hostile to their order, of the indignity and injustice to which she had been subjected. The liberal journals—ever hankering after such details, so compromising to the fathers, who for years and years had been most careful not to commit themselves, though the ground were burning under their feet—would infallibly get hold of this thrilling little romance, scarcely credible in the middle of the nineteenth century, and serve it up as a tempting dish to their thousand readers. Here was a real danger, and one to be taken into consideration.

On the day that Louise had parted from Loubère on her way to Paris, she was not a little astonished to meet a stranger at Lyons, at the hotel where she alighted, who informed her that he wished to speak to her for a moment on a subject of the most pressing importance.

Louise's first thoughts flew to her brother; perhaps this might be some messenger from him, bringing even, though she dared not allow herself to hope it, news of his escape. She asked the man in.

"I wish to be candid with you, mademoiselle," he said; "I am sent by the Jesuits. I do not, however, come to you with any hostile purpose. On the contrary, my mission is peaceable."

"Go on, sir."

"In the first place, let me ask you whether you suppose for an instant that the Jesuits are ignorant of the rash conduct of the countess . . . ."

"I know nothing about it."

"Then I can assure you, on my word of honour, and in the name of the order, that they knew nothing of the affair till a week after you had left St. Aventin."

"Possibly not. But why come and tell me that?"

"For this reason: at present it is of the highest importance, if we would avoid any further scandals—and surely we've had enough of them already—that a veil should be thrown over the past. The Jesuits are powerful, and it is not easy to get hold of them. To create a disturbance would lead to no very palpable result. In all probability, mademoiselle, you are incapable of vengeance;—you are a Christian to whom it would be needless to preach forgiveness of injuries; and if you have been injured by the Jesuits, I call God to witness that it has been quite involuntarily. So I came to propose an amicable arrangement:—That you should quietly retire into any small town you choose—in the country, if you like (that would be preferable)—and there maintain a strict silence on everything that has transpired. The Jesuits are not so hard to deal with as you may imagine; they promise you a thousand francs a year, in addition to your aunt's legacy."

"Have you anything more to say?"

"Yes; I forgot the most important point. The Jesuits, who are omnipotent at Rome, engage to pro-

cure your brother's release, on condition that he enters a monastery for the remainder of his life."

"I cannot accept any engagement in my brother's behalf," said Louise; "but as far as I myself am concerned, I want nothing, and will receive nothing from the Jesuits. I would rather die than be under any obligation to those who have robbed me of my property and personal freedom. As for the countess, she was my mother's friend; so she may rely upon my secrecy as far as the mention of her name is concerned."

"Beware, mademoiselle; you will regret, one day, that you did not accept this proffered intervention in your brother's behalf."

"I leave his case in the hands of God. You may go, sir," in a tone indicating her will that the interview should be closed.

Denis (for he it was) withdrew. He was returning from Italy, charged by the general of the order to discover Louise in her retreat at Lans-le-bourg.

Meanwhile Louise herself, who was beginning to get accustomed to the Jesuit style of doing things, observed that he watched her incessantly. The day that she started for Paris, he was at the station and in the train, though he had not impudence enough to seat himself in her compartment. She took a carriage to the hotel in the Rue Grenelle-St.-Germain: Denis was in a cab behind her. The next morning she looked out for lodgings, and hired an apartment. Half-an-hour afterwards, the Jesuits were made acquainted with her address—Rue de la Barouillière, No. 5.

The house was quiet, in a quiet street; often there was not a carriage during the whole twenty-four hours. Yet it was a pleasant, airy, wide thoroughfare, with pavements on either side; a solitary spot in the midst of busy Paris; a charming retirement for mourners, students, or runaway lovers.

No. 5 had two sets of lodgings, one opening on the street, with a porter's lodge at the great door, the other looking into a little paved court, with not a single spring or summer flower to make it cheerful.

Louise's apartment was very simple in accordance with her taste and slender means. At the entrance was a small lobby, then a sitting-room, and two bedrooms—one for her absent brother, whom she was ever expecting, the other for herself: close to the entrance, a little nook, dignified by the name, style, and title of a kitchen. The whole was four stories up. We may add that it was exquisitely neat; and had Julio been there, it would have resembled the Louvre after the St. Aventin presbytery.

There Louise returned, evening after evening, cheerful or sad, according to her success in rousing Government sympathies in her brother's behalf. The day she heard that an official despatch had actually been sent to the French ambassador at Rome, requesting Julio's release, she fell on her knees, as soon as she got home, in devout thankfulness; her little room seemed glorified with the brightliness and beauty of the fairy halls of the Alhambra.

Amongst the persons of fashion whom she endea-

voured to interest in her brother's behalf was the Baroness de Tourabel, an intimate friend of the Empress, and a great favourite at Court, though she held no office there. On the other hand, as she belonged on her mother's side to the very highest families in the Faubourg St. Germain, she had numerous connexions in that most aristocratic quarter. So the social position of the baroness was undeniable.

She had heard Louise's name, having spent some of her earliest years at T——, with her father, who was an artillery general, and so became intimate with the La Clavière family. She was a very superior person, combining two qualities not often associated—kind-heartedness and general acuteness. She was greatly interested in Louise, and gave her powerful letters of recommendation to the foreign minister.

Louise by no means took advantage of the entreaty she received from Madame de Tourabel to pay her frequent visits. Now and then she called, staying too short a time, however, to please her new acquaintance, who eagerly sought her society, all surrounded though she was by numberless attractions of fashion and pleasure. Yet these casual interviews sufficed to create and foster between them a real friendship, which the poor girl found to be an inestimable comfort in her solitary position.

Above all, Louise relied upon her influence in the matter of Julio's release; and the baroness, who regarded her as her ideal of beauty of mind and body, drew her more and more to her side, and neglected no measures

likely in any way to conduce to the liberation of the captive Julio.

At Court and in society, she detailed the romantic particulars of Louise's abduction, and her still more romantic escape, with such striking exactness that the brother and sister became the hero and heroine of the moment in news-loving Paris.

CHAPTER II.

A FREE COUNTRY.

It may be asked how Jacomo managed to procure the key with which he had opened Julio's cell. Such a step would be all but impossible anywhere except in Rome. But there anything may be done that's attempted in the right way.

The circumstances were as follows:—

The principal jailor of the Inquisition prisons had been killed in the disturbance on the 2nd of February. His successor was an old smuggler of Montalto, who, having failed in that highly honourable calling, resolved to seek a living in some servant's place at Rome. Monsignor, the representative of the Holy Office at Viterba, had given him a letter of recommendation; thanks to which acknowledgment of certain services, which it was equally inexpedient to detail or forget, Nicolo was promoted to the distinguished post of jailor of the Holy Office. He was a perfect Hercules—a man with the look of a lion—ever so much fiercer than was necessary to guard such inoffensive creatures

as Catarinella, the dreamer of Viterba, and our friend Julio.

Jacomo having convinced himself that none of the Roman police suspected him of a share in the assault on the prisons, so complete had been his disguise on that occasion, set himself to inspect the place and its bearings, with a view to further measures. It was poor work, however, so he thought, to walk round and round the cage—he must get inside.

One fine morning he had the audacity to knock at the wicket, and ask, in a firm, commanding voice, to see the head jailor. He introduced himself by saying that he came from Viterba, and was a relation, though a distant one, of Laura Doni.

The jailor received him at the grating, and looked at him sharply.

"The Signora Doni," said he, "has nothing to say to any one. . . . . But, per Dio Baccho," he added, a moment afterwards, "I think I recognize you, my boy."

Jacomo thought he was lost; but, without betraying any emotion, returned the man's look with another of the most supreme indifference, and waited for what would follow.

"You're Jacomo."

"Yes; and who are you? I've certainly seen you before."

"My name is Nicolo."

"Give us your fist, then. We are the flower of Vetrala."

As it happened, they had been boys together, and

together had served their rude apprenticeship to the smuggler's trade; after which they had separated, each following his own course. So they had not seen each other for many years.

It was an interview between old friends.

Jacomo, quite at his ease, adopted a patronizing tone.

"Nicolo," he said, "this is a horrid place you've got. You have other people under lock and key, but you are under lock and key yourself. It is easier to get to a cardinal than to get to you. Come back with me, man, to our glorious mountain country. You are young and lithe: you'll do well."

"Good wages here."

"All right, then leave them to your successor; I'll get you married. Some worthy woman will bring you a fine spanking dowry; and you'll have a home of your own. Oh, how I wish I could get you away from here!"

"Not easy. This is a certainty, you see: that's the point. I own when I first came, I had no liking for a jailor's work. I didn't care to watch those who could not have hurt a fly. Now I am used to it. Besides, what would be the good of my posting off into the country?"

"Good? why you may breathe there."

"What would you have, Jacomo? Man is a queer sort of a creature. I am suited to my position."

"Well, since you happen to be a friend of mine, you might as well tell me about poor Laura, who has a great reputation in our mountains. I saw her leave her home with a sorry escort."

"Just so. I have the honour of waiting upon that

gracious lady. She delivers dreadful prophecies to me every now and then. Prophesying is her line, you see; only I need not tell you that, as you are one of her people. Every time I take her her food, she spins a yarn; of course, I never listen to her; between ourselves, I think she's a little cracked."

"And there's a French fellow caged up along with her, isn't there?"

"Oh yes, a priest; meek as a lamb."

"What's he done?"

"Done! a fellow doesn't come here for doing anything, Jacomo. The poor wretch is as good as gold; only in Rome they have a strange way of their own."

"Not tried yet, is he?"

"Tried! Oh no; they're never in a hurry about trying prisoners in the Eternal City; least of all in this shop."

And he added in a low voice,—

"Look, Jacomo, that's his cell, the first round the corner; next one is Laura Doni's."

And Jacomo examined the outside of the cell carefully, and calculated the height of the wall next the street.

"That yard wall is easy enough to get over," he said.

"To get over, man! Why, you're clean daft; you don't suppose the yard is meant to walk in? A party would have to see the outside of his cell first, and that they never do here."

"Not even to get a mouthful of air?"

"No. It seems they can do without it. You see,

Jacomo, this prison is not like the one the Holy Office had before. I saw that in 1848, and the sight was enough to keep one awake at night for six months after. Here our arrangements are merely provisional. As soon as we have got rid of these plaguey French, we shall return to our old palace, and sweet little underground cells. The fact is, we don't want to go to any expense in this place—we shall stop here so short a time. New doors and locks were all we had to get. Just look at them; they are strong enough."

"I should think so, if one might judge by the keys."

And as he spoke, Jacomo looked narrowly at a huge bunch hanging up to a nail in Nicolo's low narrow room.

"Thundering keys they are," he added; "has each cell got one to itself?"

"Oh, no. This one belongs to those in the first court there, and opens a dozen of them."

And Nicolo showed his friend the keys of each court.

As he did so, Jacomo, with the quick eye of an old smuggler, had examined the one belonging to the first court, and, with wonderful dexterity, taken off its impression on some wax which he held in his hand. Then he chatted on with the gaoler about a variety of things, among others, the idea, which he vainly urged upon him, of giving up his post; not that he cared an atom whether he did so or not—and at last took his departure, promising to come and have another talk with him very soon, before he went back to Vetrala.

From the prison he went straight to a locksmith's.

On his way he hatched up a tale to the effect that he was porter to the Duke of San-Claro; that he had lost the key of the duke's most particular wine-cellar, and didn't want his master to know it. He showed the man the pattern of the key which he had himself prepared after the impression in the lock. As he promised to pay largely for the job, the locksmith did not consider it expedient to question the veracity of the narrative. It's true, a man in his business is harder to bribe than any other class in Rome. Still money will do anything, and Jacomo had a long purse. The next day he had the required key in his possession.

Having paid the price down, he left the shop; but struck by a sudden idea, went back, and said to the man,—

"In case this should fail, would you mind lending me a skeleton-key?"

At first the locksmith refused; but Jacomo's scudi overcame his reluctance; and our ill-fated hero set out on the expedition, the sequel of which is already known, equipped with all that he required to ensure his success.

Jacomo's two friends had got hold of Julio, when he sank down exhausted in the street, and, darting into a narrow, winding street opposite the prison-yard, out of the way of the soldiers who were conducting an eager search, they dragged rather than led their exhausted charge to the city gate, where horses were waiting. Then came a moment of dreadful anxiety,—where was Jacomo? Should they wait for him? He didn't climb

the wall by the rope-ladder;—had he been stopped at the bottom?—had he fallen? These, and a hundred other questions, rose to their lips. Julio wanted to wait for his deliverer; but the two others, more experienced in similar emergencies, decided otherwise. It would have been madness for them to have delayed; they would have had the entire Roman police at their heels.

Taking a guide, they followed the road to Rocca-San-Stephano, the nearest hamlet in the Apennines, below Subiaco, on the Neapolitan frontier. Once there, they were beyond the reach of the Papal sbirri.

Loubère had gone there the day before, and was waiting, with feverish impatience, the result of this attempt—the last which the exhausted condition of his finances would have enabled him to arrange with the brave Jacomo.

What was Julio's astonishment on being addressed in French the moment he entered the Neapolitan frontier? During the journey, he could get nothing more out of his companions than a repetition of what had passed at Osteria della Sabina. They imagined, at first, in their simplicity, that Jacomo had secured their services for the rescue of some young girl. Such exploits were quite in their line; but to get a man out of the prison of the Holy Office was another affair altogether: and had not Jacomo, well knowing the terror which the bare mention of the name was sufficient to inspire, kept a discreet silence on that head, they would have thought twice before they committed themselves to the enter-

prise. They knew nothing of the history connected with their bold deed, and Loubère's name had never passed their lips.

So Julio was fairly at sea. As the Frenchman came forward and grasped his hand, in a delirium of joy, the darkness prevented him from distinguishing his features, while the excitement of delight made the voice so indistinct, from emotion, that he utterly failed to recognize him.

"You don't know me," he said. "My name is Loubère, whose life you saved at St. Aventin. I have tried to pay the debt at Rome. But where is Jacomo?"

Julio saw through the whole thing. Loubère had been his deliverer.

CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER MURDER.

JULIO had been so long cut off from all external communication, that he waited, with the utmost anxiety, to learn all that had happened during his incarceration, and, above all, where and how Louise was.

Loubère told him of her fortunate escape to the frontier, her arrival at Savoy, his interview with her at Lans-le-bourg, his proceedings at Rome, and the failure of the ambassador's appeal to Cardinal Antonelli.

Then came a history of the demonstration of the 2nd February, and Jacomo's first attempt to rescue him. Alas! there could be little doubt that this time he had fallen a victim to his courageous devotion.

The two French priests were most hospitably entertained by the Reverend Father Villeta, superior of the Theatine monks at Rocca-San-Stephano—a priest of liberal ideas, who had been brave enough to withstand the dominant influence of the superior clergy. Julio suffered, for a long time, from an attack of low

fever. Accustomed as he had been to unrestricted liberty, pure mountain air, and daily exercise, it was no matter of wonder that his sudden imprisonment in a wild beasts' den, where breeze or sunshine never came, and whose total area was two yards, had materially undermined his constitution. His appearance was entirely changed, his hair had grown white, and his whole system had suffered from general atrophy, like a plant long buried in the dark. The Holy Office had taken him in the prime of his youth, the brave smuggler released him a decrepit old man.

Loubère had agreed with Louise, before they left Lans-le-bourg on their separate journeys, to write to her regularly every week, and he had kept his word. His letters came every Thursday, addressed to the Poste Restante; and Louise's delight was to go to the Rue Jean-Jacques-Rousseau, and get a letter, announcing, if not her brother's escape, at all events some prospect of it.

Loubère's style was not Ciceronian; it was a mixture of the peasant, the soldier, and the churchman. His clerical education showed itself in various little details; the general effect was military, the thoughts were thoroughly good, exhibiting the courageous freedom of the genuine mountaineer spirit.

Loubère little thought that the pontifical police at Rome read all his letters. Louise, however, found it out from slight unavoidable tearings of the envelopes and the substitution of a false seal. Under the Papal government, described as so mild and so courteous, the

innermost secrets of bosom friends are exposed to the gaze of coarse, vulgar officials, in the pay of Christ's representative on earth. Nothing escapes their eye; and since the presence in Rome of the army of occupation, even up to the present day, it has been necessary for the wives of general officers and others to be as careful as possible to make their letters vague and unimportant, lest the contents should reach the cardinal minister,—a feature this in modern civilization which should not be lost sight of, if one would understand the character of that system which some are for upholding in the city of the Popes.

Loubère never suspected that copies of his letters had been addressed to the Archbishop of Chambéry, and that a terrible charge against him was being based upon them. It is easy to understand that a man of his style of mind and disposition would write in a tolerably outspoken way, and give utterance to sentiments strong enough to hang a less obnoxious character than himself. Here is one of his letters to a brother priest at Lans-le-bourg, by no means complimentary to the Eternal City:—

"Do you know, my dear friend, that, notwithstanding the reverence due from a junior to a senior curate, I laughed till my sides ached on reading your letter. Oh, my charming lad, it's plain enough that you've only just left school, and that you are still full of those touching dreams that disappear so effectually in real life. You have an upright, honest spirit: all I desire

for you is that, when your present impressions break up and go to pieces, your faith may not be washed overboard and sink to the bottom.

"No, I didn't go exclusively to Rome to kiss the Pope's toe, I assure you; I had another object, which I will mention by-and-by, and which I trust I am on the point of realizing. I must wait a few days, however—I grieve to say, a few idle days. Inaction, for an impulsive gentleman like myself, is a positive punishment; so, to lighten my sufferings and while away this tiresome interval, I have resolved that the best thing I can do is to write to a friend.

"You have put enough questions to me to require a volume by way of full reply; but I will endeavour to condense my answers as much as possible.

"You believe, you say, in the marvellous superiority of the Roman institutions, and congratulate me on being 'in a country distinguished' (to quote your own words) 'by purity of morals and a general submissiveness to the high teaching of the Church, resulting in the nearest possible approach to the Divine idea of the Gospel.'

"I know where you got that stunning sentence from, my fine fellow; it isn't your own, it's out of Veuillot, —a neatly-worded paragraph enough, but slightly inaccurate.

"No doubt the clergy have made laws for the people; no doubt either that they profess to elevate them. A man is theirs from the moment of his birth; they get hold of him at once to baptize him, and never leave him till he's safe dead. Not a family but swarms with

priests; and to see the hosts of monks and secular clergy in the streets, one would suppose that true religion was nowhere better taught or better exemplified.

"Well, my dear friend, in order to convince you how true it is that 'this country is distinguished by purity of morals, &c.' (you know the rest), let me observe that, previous to the dismemberment of the Roman States, the average of assassinations a day was four or five, in a population of four millions. In France, with her thirty-five millions, previous to the recent annexation, there wasn't even one a day. And yet we are visited with the Code Napoleon; we have a university, lay rulers, and other kindred abominations!

"I may add that, while in France an assassin is looked upon with abhorrence, in Italy, provided he doesn't stick some fat old monk or priest, he is merely described as excitable and impulsive,—that's all. For every hundred crimes of this category, justice notices about twenty. No witnesses appear. What then? Scarcely fair to be hard upon a worthy fellow in the main, for such a trifle. He did it, not with the idea of robbing, but to avenge himself for some real or fancied injury, and it would appear that 'the Divine idea of the Gospel' ignores such insignificant offences.

"I may mention that robberies are not nearly so frequent here as assassinations. Covetousness is not a besetting sin of the Roman people. The only thieves here are highwaymen occasionally, and officials invariably, without a single exception.

"You are opening your eyes very wide, and begin-

ning to think that the population of the Roman States, though so 'submissive to the high teaching of the Church' (I think that's the right way to put it), as well as innocent of any acquaintance with the *Siècle* or *Opinion Nationale,* are not exactly a collection of interesting saints. You may be pretty sure that the rest of the commandments are treated with equal indifference. How comes it? you ask. Simply from this fact:—Let a man be clear about the absolute necessity for the world's salvation, that the Pope should have temporal as well as spiritual power, and he may be or do anything else he pleases. Sound on that point, he is welcome to attend to Christianity by-and-by. Perhaps, you fancy they preach the Gospel here. To be sure, they do; there's nothing they're so anxious about—bless your heart! Why, my dear fellow, they have so many miracles to look after, so many wonderful madonnas to fête, so many saints, old and new, to commemorate, that there is no leisure left to attend to the rest—the rest being Jesus Christ and the Evangel message of His grace.

"As regards church ordinances, in all matters of external worship, the Romans beat the French. Three-fourths of the Pope's subjects would be more scandalized at seeing one of their neighbours dining off the wing of a fowl on a fast day, than killing an enemy. In the latter case, they would come to his aid to protect him from the sbirri; in the former, they would be the first to denounce him to the Holy Office, remembering that the episcopate of the Roman States assembled in council at Loreto, in 1856, published an edict, detailing the crimes,

cognizance of which is entrusted to the Inquisition,—among which are neglect of saints' days, want of respect for the Church, and remissness in the observance of fasts. For these deadly offences the punishments awarded are excommunication, imprisonment, banishment, and death; and to him who fails to disclose them, when he knows of their being committed, the same penalties.

"Such were the pleasing arrangements of 1856—a graceful reply to the echoes of reform in every other part of Europe. Such is a specimen of those sublime enactments, before which a well-known prelate bows with admiring love.

"There's no mistake but the Romans have plenty of law. There are canons, briefs, and pontifical bulls. All these various little edicts are, at times, inconsistent. The Pope speaks in such and such terms, and goes down to the grave. His successor flatly contradicts him. But, as they are all infallible, it stands to reason that they must all be right; so, all their proclamations are legally binding. For example, in the disgraceful affair of the boy Montara, bulls were quoted for and against the abduction. Pius VI. not only allowed the baptism of Jewish infants, without their parents' consent, but also the forcible removal of them from the parents' roof, on the pretext that they had been baptized, as in the Montara case. Now, the decisions of the Holy Office are diametrically opposite, and yet they profess to be infallible, being invested with papal authority. And as, at that time, the uppermost idea was to return to the spirit and teaching of the Middle Ages, the Inquisition influence

had the ascendancy. No decree is ever repealed at Rome. Bulls, edicts of any kind, buried possibly for many an age, may, at any time, rise from their graves, according to the measure of idiotcy in the governing mind. And, speaking of Jews, what do you think, my friend, of that pleasant injunction requiring a physician, when called in by one of the Hebrew race, first to try and convert him, and, failing that, to leave him to his fate? Mark you, Jews are prohibited from studying or practising medicine. Do you imagine that the august inquisitors who produced that precious enactment, or the holy Popes who authorized it, ever studied a certain well-known story of a good Samaritan?

"I hated the Inquisition before I came here; but how infinitely has that hatred deepened, now that I have seen all it has done, all it could do, in the forging of fetters, the elaborating of tortures, and the trampling out of the life of human conscience and rights. To annihilate it, you must annihilate the temporal power. The Popes are more or less muzzled. Not one of them dare destroy it. Its cells are still occupied, and its laws active; while the edict of 1856 accorded it the power of life and death.

"When, in 1848, I saw a few fools trying to revive the horrors of 1793, by exhibiting waistcoats à la Robespierre and Marat, I felt a creeping sensation. Such, too, I experience when I meet a white-robed Dominican; he brings with him memories equally bloody. After all, our Convention leaders were but weak imitators of the Inquisition; and the law with

reference to suspected persons was mild in the extreme when regarded side by side with the savage edicts of the Holy Office. It did not enjoin wives, mothers, and children to denounce those dearest to them, under pain of death, as they did. The horrible profanation of the tombs of St. Denis is but a plagiarism, the original act having been perpetrated by the inquisitor-monks when they flung out the remains of heretics on the common highway. No reverence did they show for the bones of princes, assuming that those princes had failed in a single point of orthodoxy; and the Convention merely followed in their steps, and heaped like insult on crowned heads—whose only offence was royal rank, the climax of heterodoxy in the judgment of the revolutionist. The Convention disgraced our glorious Revolution; the Inquisition disgraces Catholicism—more hideous even, more encrimsoned with gore, more fashioned after the genius of hell. The political terror of the one only lasted two years—that of the other through five long lingering ages!

"As for the ceremonies you allude to, they are certainly imposing, but really there is in them a great element of the ridiculous. They are far more theatrical than religious. The Pope, carried by bearers, and embosomed in golden draperies, reminds me forcibly of the arrangements of an Indian pagoda. You gaze at him with curiosity; but the last idea in your mind is that he has the slightest connexion with Christianity, —a queer successor, he, of the fisherman of Galilee! The only time when he ever looks what he pretends

to be, is when from the balcony of St. Peter's he blesses the Christian world. Then he does, indeed, appear as the spiritual monarch of Catholicism; and before a royalty so exalted, all others perish miserably.

"You remark that the greater number of vacant places in Rome are given to laymen; true, but, no quibbling, places, not authority. There were seven or eight thousand officials, of various grades, in the Roman States, before the recent upset; an army, officered by cardinals and priests exclusively. It is so now. It's true that all the monsignori are not in orders, that they may lay aside their official garb, and marry at any moment; but then they must resign their post. And it is a noteworthy fact, that such is the horror of lay authority entertained here, that they force a layman to dress as a cleric before admitting him to office.

"It was imagined at the accession of Pius IX. that a new order of things was about to set in,—a mere imagination, nothing more. Had he had sufficient firmness — which he had not — he was without the necessary powers. No single man could clean the Augean stables. Then, too, an enlightened Pope may be followed by one from a monk's cell, whose first act would be to undo whatever might have been attempted by his predecessor in the way of reform.

"The revolution which will so soon overturn the temporal power will annihilate at the same time this effete system, under the incubus of which the Church has so long writhed convulsively. The Pope-king belongs to the Italians; the Pope, simply, to the

Catholic world. The struggles in connexion with the kingly element have resulted in so deplorable a state of things that none but an Italian can ascend the chair of St. Peter; embarrassing, as I think (I say it with reverence), for the Holy Spirit of God, invoked, as we all know, to guide the Papal elections. 'Holy Spirit,' is the invocation, 'we want a Pope, enlighten us as to our choice. Veni, Creator Spiritus — only mind, he must be an Italian.' Far better ones might be found in other parts; and surely the spiritual sovereign of 200,000,000 should be elected sometimes elsewhere than in one out-of-the-way corner; only, you see, in that corner is a small temporality which must be looked after: a little political farm, requiring a special kind of farmer—neither French, nor English, nor yet Spanish, but Italian.

"So, 'Holy Spirit, descend, we pray Thee, and name an Italian!' Awkward dilemma that for Him who is invoked, to which the revolution will put an end.

"After all, this solemn invocation is but a pleasant fiction. Everything is a fiction at Rome. That's the place for cunningly-devised fables, and strange old tales well fitted to sing Catholic humanity to sleep in the snugly-lined cradle of indolence and credulity. There you may have poetic legends composed in the sweet seclusion of the cloister, apocryphal relics, traditions rivalling the wonders disclosed in the pages of Lemprière—not, mind you, told to make men laugh or cry round wide old hearths at Christmas time, but told to men who are commanded to believe them, but who,

at last, are erecting themselves into an attitude of kingly scorn as they repel the insolent lies, and order truth. Possibly the Church, emancipated from secular trammels, may enter yet on a new, a spiritual path, and reappear, in the words of Lacordaire, 'clothed with the old glory that invested her before the time of Constantine.' Such happy destiny I wish her, and you a thousand blessings.

"LOUBÈRE."

Happily Loubère was not so imprudent as to be explicit in his letters to Louise; certain phrases, agreed upon between them, sufficed for all practical purposes. On all other points, however, he was by no means careful in his phrases. His rash sentences often made her smile, while they were working out for him a heavy penalty.

His last letter was as follows:—

"I leave Rome in a couple of hours: I shall be in a free country to-night, ready to join the general cry —'Roma veduta, fede perdita!' And it is more especially at Rome that the desire for freedom burns in the bosoms of those who have not the distinguished honour of being cardinals, monsignori, robbers, or beggars. Three cheers for liberty, and the glorious prospect it will bring with it!"

The next day, Louise received a telegraphic despatch through Ancona, running thus:—

"*Rocca-San-Stephano.*

"Thanks to Loubère and Jacomo, I am free. I am very anxious as to the latter. Loubère goes back to Lans-le-bourg. After a few days' rest, I shall start for Paris."

In fact, Loubère, after having spent two delightful days with his friend, set out for Turin through the the Marches. His leave of absence from the archbishop of Chambéry was already up; so he felt it desirable to return as soon as he possibly could.

Julio took a full month to recover his shattered health. Father Villete was a most attentive doctor, and devoted friend. Constant amusements, little walks, a generous and well-regulated diet, served by degrees to repair the deadly work that his short sojourn in the Inquisition cell had accomplished.

He concluded that Loubère was at this time peaceably installed in his curacy, and expected to hear from him of his safe arrival, when an enclosure came from Paris, containing two letters, one from his sister, the other from his friend.

Louise impatiently entreated her brother to come. She declared she could not rest till she had him under her eye.

Loubère's communication was very serious:—

"My dear Friend,—

"You little expected to get a letter from me dated Paris. You thought I was in my mountain

home, looking after my poor, humble peasants. Nothing of the sort. Let me tell you what has happened.

"On reaching Lans-le-bourg, I found my vicar pulling a very long face at me.

"'You're wanted at the palace," he said; "you must go at once to Chambéry. You're no longer curate here; your successor has been appointed.'

"I told him I wanted to go and celebrate a mass.

"His answer was simply, 'You can't.'

"'How, can't?' I said. 'Am I suspended or interdicted?'

"'Don't know,' he replied; 'but the archbishop has written to me to say that you no longer belong to the diocese. As to the reason why, &c., you must settle that with his highness.'

"It was no good disputing with this worthy man, so I set off for Chambéry. There, there was a row, I believe you, of no mean kind. You know my character, and how desperate I can be when I am driven to it. The archbishop received me in his small drawing-room. I was informed that my licence was withdrawn, and that I might have, if I chose, an 'exeat pro quâcunque diœcesi.'

"'You're in a tremendous hurry with your exeat, monseigneur,' I said; 'may I ask what I've done?'

"'I'm not required to give you a reason for my conduct, sir. I have full power to employ or dismiss you.'

"'Not without some cause, monseigneur.'

"'Cause, sir! plenty of that. Not to mention your

conduct at T——, which won't bear inspection; your goings on at Rome are quite sufficient.'

"'My goings on at Rome! monseigneur. I have done nothing to be ashamed of. I have only served a good cause, that's all.'

"'The government of his Holiness differs from you. You have been most severely denounced.'

"'Will your highness have the goodness to show me the letter?'

"'Not by any means, sir. What impudence, for an inferior to ask his superior to show him his correspondence with Rome!'

"My monkey was up by this time.

"'Impudence! monseigneur. What do you mean? You have an accusation against me, and refuse to show it me! You positively decline to specify the complaints! You condemn me unheard! I'll never believe that! You're joking! It's impossible!'

"'It's quite possible, sir. However, you shall hear some of the complaints. You have been living a life totally unsuited to your priestly character. You have mixed with low company. You have reviled the Pope, the cardinals, and the Jesuits; also, you have conspired at Rome against the temporal power. You have allied yourself with the enemies of the Church. You have applauded their demonstrations, especially that of the 2nd of February. We know all about you. You even tried to bribe a domestic prelate in the Papal court; but he scorned your overtures.'

"'That's a lie! He was the easiest fellow to bribe

you ever met with. He never repelled my overtures; only he sacked my money.'

"'You are libellous, sir; you might be prosecuted for slander.'

"'Oh, I'm no more libellous than thousands of others, who'll say the same at any moment. Robbers and spies—robbers and spies; that's the sort that the Papal government is made up of.'

"You see, my dear Julio, I saw I was a gone character, so I determined to have my say. I thought it would be a bit of fun to put my prelate in a passion. There's always something amusing in a holy Roman's episcopal rage; and I wanted a laugh.

"My most reverend Savoyard was wild.

"'Here are copies, sir, of every letter you have written to a female, called La Clavière, full of most damnable proofs against you.'

"'Monseigneur,' I replied very quietly, 'there is not a single sentence in any one of them, the least inconsistent with the respect due to that most admirable young lady.'

"'Be it so,' said the archbishop; 'but, quite apart from that, the correspondence is full of proofs of your temper and views sufficient to humble you before me, under a grateful sense of my kindness in granting you an exeat, and not insolently fly into a passion with an archbishop.'

"In another moment, I should have made a dash at the fellow, and punished him at my leisure.

"'Monseigneur,' I said, 'you know better even than

I do, that your exeat, as you call it, is so much waste paper. No bishop will receive me without a letter of recommendation. Do you mean to give me one?'

"'I mean to do my duty by you.'

"'Shilly-shallying again—always shilly-shallying. I ask you, monseigneur, whether, when I present myself to another bishop, you authorize me to tell him that you will recommend me? That's a plain question, isn't it? I want an answer. You must see that it would be ridiculous for me to go and knock at the doors of some ten or a dozen bishops, to receive invariably the same greeting, "Where is your recommendation from your late diocesan?"'

"'You wish me to be plain with you, sir, do you? Well, then, I won't recommend you. You have been too insolent to Rome,—insolence which affects us in common with the rest of the episcopal bench. Understand, that the police are perfectly aware of your occupation the last few days of your residence in the Papal States.'

"'Then your sentence is one of final banishment from the priesthood, monseigneur?'

"'It's whatever you like, sir.'

"And, abruptly nodding, he intimated to me that it was time to go.

"As for me, I didn't return it. A secretary gave me an exeat, which I have preserved as a curious and interesting document. I left the palace in a towering rage. Convinced in my own mind that no French bishop would venture to receive one who had offended

the Jesuits and made light of the temporal power, I sold my clerical dress, and paid my place to Paris with the profits.

"So here I am, thrust out of the priesthood; not daring to confess my orders, lest I should meet with a general repulse. And all this in consequence of a malicious report—the exaggeration of the Roman police—and the outrageous lies of the sneaking coward that stole my money. I have not infringed my priestly obligation in a single particular. My life has been stainless. Yet, without any inquiry as to my private acts, in the midst of the most horrible temptations, without giving me a chance of defending myself at a trial, they have passed a summary sentence, and driven me from my sacred office.

"At first, it seemed to me to be a case of looking forward to breaking stones; or, if I were not strong enough for that, of begging, with the eventual prospect of dying in a ditch.

"But, thank God! my friend, it's not come to such a pitch. I am a man, and I can work. So, here I am, installed in a printing-office, in the Boulevard Pigale. 'In the sweat of my face I eat bread,' without giving the enemies of the Church the gratification of being in at my death, or watching me parading my disgrace before their vindictive eyes.

"I make no reference to your sister, as she is going to write herself. She made me a generous offer of assistance worthy of you both; but which I felt compelled to decline. You are poor yourselves now—

thanks to my friends and yours; nor could I possibly make you pay for my slight return of the past service you rendered me.

"I am looking out for your arrival almost as impatiently as your sister. The hour is come when, on the strength of those persecutions which have elevated you to the dignity of a martyr, above all, on the strength of your long meditation—sole relief in the gloom of your cell—you must raise your flag and march boldly to the front.

"Your glorious aspirations, which you communicated to me at Rocca-San-Stéphano, must be realized at once. The old state of things is dying out on every side. The religious world is no better than a carcase, galvanized by the Jesuits, and their obedient satellites—the monks, of every character, rank, and guise. There is no life left in it, I am certain. I know you, in some measure, think otherwise; for my part, I cannot agree with you. Truth is inseparable from sympathy, fatherly love, and tender devotion. In going where these are to be found, I shall be sure to encounter it.

"Adieu, dear friend. We long for the happy day when the emancipated victim of the Inquisition will put in his appearance in Paris—Paris, the great and glorious—the home of freedom of thought, liberty, and delight.

"So, come as soon as you can.

"LOUBÈRE."

CHAPTER IV.

CATHOLICISM AND LIBERTY.

THE day after he received the letters contained in the previous chapter, Julio, notwithstanding his weakness, determined to quit his hospitable refuge at Rocca-San-Stéphano. Let us follow him to the free soil of France, where the officers of the Inquisition have no power to injure him; where wise laws protect a priest, even if they can't always rescue him from positions of peril. Here he is at length restored to his sister, whom he had rescued from the cloister. The little room in the Rue Barouillère is their quiet home, where they may rest, ennobled by affliction, and ripening for glorious service to the Church of Christ.

As Loubère concluded, Julio's reflections in his retreat had not been without result. He at once surrounded himself with a circle of liberal minds and theological writers, whom the extravagancies of ultramontanism had greatly exasperated. Some of them had been associated with Lacordaire's *Nouvelle Ere,*

and their invariable motto was the union of Liberty and Catholicism. The *Catholic Liberal* became their organ, in which they advocated a cause abandoned by the superior clergy, and espoused only by loyal-hearted men, who have learnt never to despair.

The first numbers of the new paper were welcomed with acclamation by the European press. Julio's name attached; the remembrance of his cruel imprisonment in the prison of the Holy Office; his wonderful escape, to the surprise of all who heard of it; his undoubted talent, and the courage with which he had avowed sentiments repudiated at Rome with the sternest abhorrence,—all this combined to secure a welcome for his paper.

Julio was an able, eloquent, and pointed writer, as the *Catholic Atlas* frequently discovered to its cost. His scheme was very simple:—Total separation between Church and State, in the mutual interests of both; liberty of conscience — unmistakeably proclaimed in the Gospel by the words and deeds of the great Head of the Church, as illustrated in His rebuke of those who would fain have brought down fire from heaven on an unbelieving city; the Papacy free from the cares of royalty; the episcopacy recognizing its obligations; the inferior clergy emancipated from the perpetual obligation of their priestly vows. Such were the outlines of the reformation the *Catholic Liberal* proposed in its first impression. The whole idea was Gallicanism disenthralled from the bondage of civil power, and a thorough return to the teaching of the

first ages of the Church. A pleasant morsel this for the digestion of a Pontifical and priestly oligarchy. It is easy to imagine the mingled sensations which so original a publication would occasion in the "religious world."

CHAPTER V.

THE GIPSY PRIESTHOOD.

AMONGST the dignitaries attached to the Archbishop of Paris is an official entitled M. le Promoteur. Should you be a priest, and feel a natural anxiety to ascertain the origin of this gentleman's designation, you will find that he is the individual appointed for the agreeable work of promoting or elevating you. Such, at least, is the theory of the name. In reality, however, this functionary is charged with the task of maintaining a general watch over the clerical world, of issuing any needful rebukes, and, in some cases, of abasing, instead of exalting. Sometimes, even, the promoter may be seen as the assessor of an archbishop, discharging duties not very unlike the president of an assize court. With both alike, the accused is held guilty, *à priori;* the one being ready with capital punishment, the other with "the retreat au célébret," suspension or interdict. Fortunately for the accused, if the promoter is extra severe, the prelate may possibly be lenient, and so a compromise is effected. But, under any circumstances, the poor

priest is indeed to be pitied who falls into the clutches of this anomalous Jack-in-office.

Generally speaking, the promoter's position is no light one. Were he to confess the truth, he would be compelled to admit that his burden is burdensome in the extreme. Apart from the reverend personages who are everlastingly coming to him to get their célébret signed, he is entrusted with the care of all the errant priests from every quarter of the world.

Every melodramatic hero who has managed to escape public justice, through lack of vigilance and activity on the part of the police, or whom the police themselves have assisted in escaping, from a desire to preserve Catholic dominions from the fame of exploits more romantic than equitable, leaves his card at the promoter's office. Every sham Oriental bishop, who, displaying a white beard down to his waist, maintaining a discreet silence, lest he should make a slip and speak French, and sporting a secretary well up in Armenian, Arabic, and Syriac, comes to France, on a charitable errand, in behalf of some legendary Christians at Lebanon, Aleppo, or Antioch, whose abodes have been burnt by the Druses, makes a similar call. Ditto, the numerous "monks," who, with the same invariable chin decoration, fall, bathed in tears, at the feet of credulous Parisians, imploring their aid in the construction of a Carmelite monastery, or pilgrim hospice, among the rocks of Petra, or, more eligible and airy situation, on the heights of Tabor. Ditto, every "priest," with a miscellaneous assortment of letters testimonial, and

episcopal recommendations, albeit never penned by episcopal hands. Ditto, the noble army of bandits, after having scoured a score of dioceses, humbugged a score of bishops, and plundered a score of parishes. These all, an illustrious host,—dramatic hero, mitred Eastern, snow-clad abbot, solemn-browed cleric, and gay freebooter,—besiege in turn, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December, the private room of this miserably-overworked official. The promoter is expected to discern at once between good and evil, false and true, alike in characters or beards, and to decide, at a moment's notice, whether his visitor be a very reverend father or a very irreverent outlaw. It is assumed that he has wit enough to take liberties at once with the long flowing robe of the most illustrious Oriental prelate, the hood of the monk, the cloak of the abbé, exposing the true identity beneath the awe-inspiring disguise. It ought to be a joke to him to analyze, in the twinkling of an eye, the most astute "story"—let the adventurer who brings it be who he may, or his country among the remotest on the face of the earth. As for seals,—exhibiting every conceivable variety of cross, and everything that is impressive and august in the way of mottoes,—these should be trifles in the path of his scrutiny, if he is to be civil to honest men, and to tell the rogues at once that "he will take time to consider their request."

So that it will be pretty evident that the hands of the excellent promoter are tolerably full.

In the year 1861—the year of which we are writing,

—the office above described was filled by the Abbé de Baraminos, whom the juniors of the junior clergy amused themselves by nicknaming "M. Gare-à-Minos." He was a tall, shrivelled-up sort of a man, middle-aged, with sharp, thin features, and a few straggling white hairs: good-natured enough, as a rule, if you knew how to manage him, on days when he had escaped a sparring match with his little old housekeeper, or had come to a friendly understanding as to fondling with his cat Nina.

The Jesuits having learnt, through their police spies, that Julio, thanks to Jacomo, had escaped to the frontier, and was sure to return to France for the purpose of rejoining his sister at Paris, prepared to take their measures accordingly.

Assembled in council, they resolved to make every effort to prevent him from being accepted by the ecclesiastical authorities, otherwise, by virtue of his own undoubted talents, as well as from the interest which the tale of his adventures would arouse among the clergy, he stood a fair chance of becoming the hero of the day.

Could they but contrive to get the archbishop to shut the doors of the Paris churches in his face, his connexion with the various priests of the city would be considerably limited, if not altogether prevented. Men under an interdict are not much sought after. Thus the honour of the clergy would be saved, and then what matter how great a stir the brother and sister might manage to make in the unbelieving world.

Above all, it was of the utmost importance that, with his unquestionable oratorical powers, he should be kept away from pulpits. He was just the man, after the maturing experience he had had, to take all Paris by storm, if he once got the ear of the congregations, and recall to their memories those extempore effusions of Lacordaire, which used once to delight them—a preacher who had by no means been replaced by Father Felix, with all his ambitious style and elaborate artistic sentences, let the Jesuit press assert the contrary as much as they pleased.

It was not exactly practicable to go straight to the cardinal archbishop, and prefer a request that the obnoxious priest might be shown the door. Unscrupulous and undaunted as the Jesuits are, there are limits which they dare not cross, and not a bishop in France would willingly suffer them to administer his diocese. Moreover, the kind and gentle dignitary enthroned at Paris could at once make manifest his resolve to act with strict impartiality. Any impressions he might receive prejudicial to Julio would naturally be very transient. The suggestion that the young priest should be dealt with severely, being necessarily couched in very moderate terms—otherwise their failure would be certain—would for that very reason be soon forgotten; while it was also a matter of uncertainty whether Julio would go direct to the archbishop or not.

The more prudent course appeared to be to put M. Baraminos on his guard. So, accordingly, the most cunning and plausible of their body was appointed to deal

with him. His name was Father Fichet. He was in the habit of meeting the promoter occasionally in the Faubourg St. Germain, in the saloons of the Duchess of Chautenay, a lady to whom he stood in the relation of spiritual director, and in whose case he took the warmest possible interest. Her daughter, the Countess de Vezère, was on the list of the Abbé Baraminos.

The stately mansion of the duchess was at some little distance from the residence of the promoter. It was a great rendezvous for the upper classes of religious society, who were fond of assembling there.

"I shall have the pleasure of seeing you in the course of the week," said Father Fichet to the Abbé Baraminos.

"You will oblige the good father, I am sure," said the countess, in an under tone: "he has a request to make."

Thus the ground was skilfully and tenderly prepared; yet, at the same time, there is no such thing as a moderate Jesuit. A man is either one heartily, or he is not one at all; and no man was more thoroughly the servant of his order than Father Fichet.

So, having assumed his gentlest aspect, and prepared himself with his most insinuating modes of address, he repaired to the promoter's. After an elaborate preamble, conceived in true diplomatic style to disguise the real purport of his visit, and after having requested the promoter's favourable energies in connexion with certain pious projects which he detailed—a request which was at once and most readily granted, as the abbé imagined that it was to that that the countess had

already alluded—the reverend father turned the conversation to the startling events that were taking place in Italy—the reprobate revolutionists, with Victor Emmanuel at their head, all of whom the Pope had excommunicated; the various conspiracies, and the demonstration of the 2nd of February. He stated that the society had received most elaborate, as well as most interesting information upon all these points. It would appear that a French priest, who had since been interdicted by the Cardinal Archbishop of Chambéry, had taken a leading part in that outbreak. Finally, he mentioned that another French priest who had been condemned to imprisonment by the Congregation of the Holy Office, for having violated the cloister of a nunnery, had effected his escape. That, after having been banished from the diocese of T—— for his publications and libellous attacks on the Jesuits, he had been received with open arms by the disaffected clergy of Naples, and had come from there to Paris. That he was at that moment conspiring in Paris against the temporal power of the Pope, and was about to issue a journal advocating the proscribed doctrines of liberty of the press, liberty of conscience, and separation of Church and State. "This priest," added the Jesuit, with consummate artfulness, "will, of course, be prohibited by the archbishop from mixing with the Paris clergy; it would be too great a scandal, in the judgment of all right-thinking people, to see such a man at the altar or in the pulpit."

"I have not met him yet at the palace," said the

promoter, "but I am much obliged to you for your important information about him."

That was enough for the Jesuit; he finished up with a few words—*bonbons*—and departed.

The blow was struck.

Julio had had too much experience to entertain the slightest doubt as to the probable nature of his reception at Paris. He knew that his powerful persecutors were as supreme there as everywhere else, even over the episcopal throne itself. Loubère's fate at Chambéry led him to anticipate his own. He felt certain that he was already scored down in the worst ink at the palace. However, he committed his cause to Him Who sways the highest as well as the lowliest hearts, and as throughout his whole life he had never uttered word or sentiment against ecclesiastical authority, nor written a single line in disparagment of that judicious rule which is the real strength of the Church and her clergy in the centre of so many counteracting weaknesses; he resolved that it was due to himself, his personal dignity, and the honour of the priesthood, that he should carry out his mission to the end. So he accepted, without a murmur, the martyr's recompense that awaited him for his unsparing exposure of abuses and their authors, who, happily, however mighty in the Church, did not constitute her entire corporation, but left behind them some to sympathize with him, and render justice not only to the sincerity and good faith, but also to the truth of his statements.

As a precautionary measure, he wrote, in the first

instance, to ask his friend, the Bishop of A——, to give him a letter of introduction to the archbishop.

The archbishop had had some intimation of the Forcassi affair and the subsequent imprisonment, and had taken a most judicious view of the case, so far as he was acquainted with it. He was by no means prepared to espouse the quarrels of the Jesuits and the Holy Office, or to recognize the authority of Roman associations; and, though he abstained from any open avowal of his opinion upon this point, he nevertheless practically made frequent protests against the domineering tendencies of the Papal court. Nor was he ignorant either of the fact that the higher officials in the government, and the more educated and intelligent section of society, were much interested in Julio's history.

All that had transpired at T——, previous to the abbé's leaving the diocese, he made light of, and received our hero with marked kindness, extending to him full sanction to officiate in Paris; adding, with a very gracious air,—

"The second chaplain of the Lycée of St. Louis is about to leave. I nominate you to the vacant post."

So, for once, the Jesuits missed the mark. As for the promoter, a quarter of an hour's conversation with the wise and gentle prelate brought him over to complete agreement with his eminence in his opinions and consequent action.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW SLANDER WAS ATTEMPTED.

YET the Jesuits were not to be beaten. They spared no pains to hinder Julio from getting a name, shining in the pulpit, and being the favourite of Parisian society. In achieving this object, they felt that they were crushing an enemy of their order, and, consequently, promoting the glory of God. To any one who has not studied the monkish system, there are certain considerations which appear monstrous, but which are capable, nevertheless, of most easy explanation. To do evil deliberately, to pursue with implacable animosity, to calumniate in every possible way a known foe,—all this seems utterly opposed to the teaching of the Gospel, which urges the forgiveness of injuries, and love of enemies. Such principles are repudiated by every upright heart. While many would allow themselves in the indulgence of contempt, as dignified and becoming, they would shrink from vengeance, as being too injurious, and start back in abhorrence from the bare thought of calumny, as an odious thing —too odious to be tolerated. Such being the case,

the question naturally arises, in what possible way could men, devoted avowedly to self-mortification, and strivings after personal sanctity, justify themselves in a deadly persecution of a gentle and blameless man, as though he had been a monster of iniquity, and an enemy of God and man? For is it not only individuals who thus persuade themselves into so extraordinary a course, but corporations acting in concert, and adopting, through arguments the miserable fallacy of which a baby might expose, a systematic line of malicious and slanderous attack. They kill with the barb of the tongue—the poison of misrepresentation; and that, too, without remorse or regret, without the slightest suspicion that they have infringed in a single respect the law of man and God.

How is this to be explained?

Had Julio, instead of being what he was, been an assassin—a Dumolard; had he met one of these very Jesuits in the dark of the evening in some out-of-the-way place, and stabbed him to the heart, the victim would have died forgiving him, and prayed for his murderer's soul with his latest breath.

Meanwhile, reverting to the darkness of mediæval days, should society entrust the function of the magistrate to the priest, and grant full powers for the execution of those condemned as heretics by the infallible Inquisition, this very man would erect the stake and light the faggots with delirious ecstasy.

You shudder with horror?

And yet the explanation is very simple. It is a

mere error of vision. Say a huntsman fires at a dark mass in the herbage, which he mistakes for a wolf, and finds he has killed a brother or a friend: would you call that homicide?

The monk pardons his enemy, because that enemy's attack has been directed upon himself. It is a private question, and he deals with it according to the Gospel law of love, as applied to his individual relations to his brethren. Be it added, in praise of his piety, that his pardon is genuine. But the man who is condemned by the Inquisition is regarded as the enemy of God; and the monk entrusts himself with the high function of avenging the divine honour. He regards himself as being in the world for that purpose only. And the more sceptical society becomes, the more conscious the monk is compelled to be of the lessening influence of his rites and observances on the society in the centre of which he practises them, the more furiously does he alight on the head of any offender whom he may regard as a ringleader in the general disaffection.

But why, it will be added, are such savage bigots allowed free scope in the world?

That's a mere matter of accident. There are those always ready to support them. And as for France, we have seen French women, these ten years past, doting on Dominicans, Capuchins, and Carmelites, and, above all, on the beloved Jesuits! God grant that you and I, reader, for your sake and mine, may have quitted this enlightened world ere the day come that shall witness the return of Inquisitional power, and the

re-erection of the Inquisitional stake in the Place de Grève.

For this query is often proposed:—Should the men at present supreme in the Church have the power hereafter of wielding the secular arm, would they put any to death who might be found resisting their will?

To this question there is but one answer—in the affirmative. It is by no means uncommon to see monks, such as Jesuits, Dominicans, or Capuchins, enter the mansions of the great and wealthy; demand to be forthwith conducted to the library, where the nobles of the eighteenth century have treasured up the mightiest intellects of their day; take down, one by one, the works of Molière, Montesquieu, Buffon, Rousseau, and Voltaire, and burn them, with merciless deliberation, in the presence of the abashed and speechless faithful.

And I ask such of you as are among the most distinguished in the school of modern thought and intellect—do you believe, for a moment, that if these men were permitted to avail themselves of the civil power to the fullest extent, they would hesitate to carry out, to the very uttermost, their desperate laws for the extirpation of all who dare to think for themselves?

You, M. Cousin—academician though you are—would smart for your independent teaching. M. Jules Simon, it would go hard with you after those fine pages that you have written. M. Lamartine, don't think you would escape after having ventured on the somewhat original and pathetic theology which confides to my

keeping my dog Rover in another world. As for George Sand, with his vigorous and burning eloquence, a single one of his nervous periods is enough to bring down upon him all the faggots that could be accumulated from all the German forests; while Victor Hugo would find that he had acted injudiciously in not submitting *Les Misérables* to orthodox critical inspection before its publication.

Alas! we shudder to write it—these bigots would glory in a united holocaust of the master intellects we have named, and imagine that in the flames of the huge human sacrifice would ascend the incense of a grateful offering to the throne of God, while His glory on earth would be advanced by the wholesale immolation.

Let it be added, however, that, in opposition to this fanatical section in the Church, there exists a body of secular clergy which repudiates these outrageous tenets, and blushes for the bloody annals of the past. Let it be added that, in the darkest bygone periods, the bloodthirsty fanaticism of the monk invariably surpassed that of the rest of the clergy. The grand principle that truth submits itself to the understanding, and does not deign to compel acceptance, plainly as it is written in the Bible, was the theory only of the latter class. It has been the characteristic tenet of the French Church for more than three hundred years, and if the nineteenth century reproaches us with the revocation of the edict of Nantes and the passing of other measures designed for the persecution of the Protestants, it must be re-

membered that these, like all other intolerant acts, were the result of Jesuit influence.

Failing stakes and blocks, however, at the present day, there is a first-rate engine of destruction easily worked, whose name is Calumny; as Julio soon discovered on his arrival at Paris. Efforts were made on all sides to destroy his reputation, to involve him in perplexities, to compromise him hopelessly, and generally to render his name a byword in the narrow religious clique likely to be affected by such proceedings. Sacristans, beadles, choristers, bell-ringers, holy ware pedlars, little book-stall keepers, statuaries, and other artists engaged in the manufacture of rosaries and miraculous medals, composed this illustrious community. Denis was among them, with a train-band, asserting that Julio had apostatized, and even become a sceptic; that he had gone to Italy on a visit to the excommunicated Passaglia, and that the two heretics were putting their heads together to construct a new religion, specially adapted to the views of democrats and red republicans. While in the very hottest circles of wild fanaticism, the rumour grew to the extent that Julio and Passaglia had all but completed their arrangements for putting the latter in the chair of St. Peter and Garibaldi on the throne of France.

Nor did they let Louise alone. They made the most of her escape from the convent, and her friendship for Loubère, declaring that she was a professed nun, who had flung off the veil. The society selected for these

latter rumours consisted mainly of female artisans, chambermaids, fruit-sellers, and portresses.

Such calumnies, when once suffered to alight in the public mind, take deep root, and become almost ineradicable, distilling their venom at all times, and in all directions. To destroy the reputation of a man in distinguished position, the most direct course is to prejudice the lowest orders against him in the first instance. The tide surges and seethes upwards, covering range after range in the social scale with its polluted waters, till it reaches the highest elevation, and engulfs the whole.

In upper circles, however, the slander requires to be of a more polished character. To this end three reiterated complaints were put in circulation, and certain members of the society of St. Vincent de Paul, devoted old ladies, and warm allies of the sons of Loyola, were commissioned (it was their one sole work) to "cry out in a lamentable voice" whenever they happened to meet the vicar-general of Paris,—"How is it that a priest who has written against the Jesuits is permitted to officiate? Can it be right that a gentleman against the triple crown and sceptre should enter the pulpit? Is it proper that the clergy of Paris should be all-hail and well-met with a gaol-bird?" referring, it may be observed, to the Inquisition cell.

The elderly females were, to do them justice, very diligent in their task, feeling sure that in thus backing up the most eminent servants of God, they were making giant strides to heaven. Then, petty remarks like these

are catching: many excellent people were scandalized at the "conduct" of the pestilent priest, and the principles of his unprincipled journal. For the larger section of the community, meanwhile—that class which does not allow itself to be overburdened with religious requirements, and admits them only to the threshold of its tastes and pleasures, precluding all encroachments on their domain; the class, in short, that holds church-going and Easter observance to be a proper sort of thing, a matter of conventional respectability, which it is as well to recognize;—for characters of this sort, a different dish was served up. The ladies aforesaid retailed in this quarter a sweet little romance to the effect that Julio had broken into a convent, and carried off his lady-love.

CHAPTER VII.

MARION LA CHAMPISE.

I HAVE no idea of disguising what is the reverse of beautiful, in false apparel. I don't like ugly things in art any more than I do in nature. I know one of our most classical legislators sings to me thus:—

> Il n'est pas de serpent, ni de monstre odieux,
> Qui, par l'art imité, ne puisse plaire aux yeux;

but I don't agree with him. The objectionable is always objectionable; a deformity is always a deformity; and if a serpent may be called lovely in art, it is because it is graceful in nature, and ill deserves the ugly remarks that have been made about it since the Fall.

A child with unpleasant things all over its face is as dear to its mother as if its beauty were undisfigured. The lady doesn't like the spots, but she likes the young person behind them.

These remarks will be a proper introduction to the very plain individual whose name heads this chapter.

Loubère, as has been already stated, had procured employment at a printing-office. With his steady eye and ready intelligence he soon became a clever and accomplished workman.

But we ought to describe his master and the whole concern. Let us do so at once.

A man of a business turn of mind, whom haphazard had made a priest, and who thought he should like to be a millionnaire, purchased, in the boulevard Pigale, many years before its present junction with the suburbs, an immense wooden shed, with two or three type-cases knocking about inside; the whole concern dignified with the imposing title of a printing-office. He got it for next to nothing, for the simple reason that that was its exact value. His bargain effected, he ensconced himself within, and set to work to beautify his unsightly establishment. A little corner of it was carpeted off, and partitioned into a sitting-room and office, where, with a proper patent authorizing him to publish any invaluable effusions that his own brains or those of others might bring forth, he composed in Auvergnese style (for his father was a cowkeeper of Mont Dore), the most flaming prospectus that ever issued from the press. The printing warehouse, it declared, was one of the finest in Europe; the stereotyping undeniable; most exquisite the work, on the smoothest satin paper; most faultless the impressions; most thoroughly calculated to distance all competition, the general mode of executing work in that establishment. It was one of the wonders of the day. And then the document which bore the

signature "L'abbé Lavialle," soaring higher and higher in its pretensions, had the cool assurance to invite cardinals, archbishops, and bishops—all the clergy high and low—to pay a visit to this marvellous spot, on the first possible opportunity. In fact, the only person exempted from the polite and pressing request, was the Pope; an omission which, considering the gratification which the inspection promised, was scarcely civil or obliging.

In a word, Lavialle had calculated on human ignorance for procuring his million. His prospectus, at first sight, looked absurd; not so, however, after it had been exposed to gentle criticism, and forwarded to palaces and presbyteries. "It must be true," was the general judgment; "he would not have had the impudence to say all this, if he only had a shed." Two or three bishops, in the space of five or six years, had managed to get lost outside the wall of the enclosure; and, through the kind assistance of cabmen, who acted as guides, pushed their way, at length, into the splendid workshops of the prospectus. They were received in solemn state. All the hands went down on their knees, according to prescribed orders; the binders and stitchers—good souls as they always are—effected numerous crossings of themselves: and their lordships took their departure enchanted with Lavialle, who had been prodigal in his professions of attachment to the pure doctrines of Rome, and had talked so incessantly, during the entire visit, that they had only been able to get out, "A very fine place, indeed!—very fine place!"

It wasn't likely that they would expose themselves, and the mistake they had made, on their return to the provinces.

Lavialle, as being a printer, found it easy to be a journalist; and his journal, the *Clerical Sentinel*, announced, with the utmost impressiveness of type and style, that, on such a day, the most illustrious, and most reverend, bishop of . . . . had paid a visit to the celebrated printing-warehouses of the Boulevard Pigale.

In short, it was an undoubted, undisputed fact, a dogma to be most thoroughly received and believed by the Catholic world, that the whole earth possessed no building so fair or sumptuous as the typographical Louvre of the illustrious Lavialle.

It was not enough, however, to have got hold of the most extensive premises, and the largest collection of types and type-cases for the smallest possible outlay. The next point was to secure workmen at the lowest possible wage. And in this, too, he succeeded. He opened a friendly asylum to interdicted priests, telling them that he would give them employment, but that, as they had not been brought up to it, they could not expect such high pay as skilled and experienced workmen. In that way, he gained his point. The employment was often a godsend to the starving outlaw. True, the master was hard, exacting, and severe, in reference to the due working out of every moment of the alloted working hours. Still, here was daily bread for the poor victim of ecclesiastical proscription—no

small mercy, as they think who have been in peril of losing it.

Thanks to these clever contrivances, the man had made a capital start. Once set going, however, his thirst for commercial success grew rapidly. The millions did not pour in fast enough, so he tried another plan —selling masses. "Selling masses!" you exclaim; "impossible!" By no means, it's done in many ways, of which Lavialle chose the most creditable.

You are a priest, say, he sends you books to the value of a hundred francs. You have in your sacristy two hundred engagements for masses which you cannot fulfil; you send him two hundred francs, with which he pays himself for his books. At the same time he writes to a disengaged priest, asking him to undertake the two hundred masses in his name, and he will send him one hundred francs' worth of books. A simple system of exchange, and perfectly innocent, but at the same time leading to fabulous gains.

There remained a third method of raising the wind, too evident to escape our friend's notice. He became a clerical banker, took care of small priestly savings, paid the regulated assessment punctually, and employed the capital in his speculation.

Having all but achieved a colossal fortune, he began to consider what honours he could manage to get. The Minister of the Interior having had the bad taste to omit him from his list of stars and crosses, and Rome having somehow forgotten to appoint him a knight of St Gregory the Great, or the Golden Spur, he was com-

pelled to turn his thoughts to clerical distinctions. He made overtures to more than one bishop with a view to obtaining the appointment of honorary canon, and at length succeeded. It was a grand day in his life, and consequently a trifle more agreeable to his printers. But there was further glory in store. A worthy bishop from the Sandwich Islands having come across the far-famed prospectus, which had penetrated even to his distant diocese,—paid a visit to the celebrated premises, on the occasion of a subsequent visit to Paris, and in the height of his admiration for the reams of paper which he saw piled up, and the masses of type and printer's stores, he then and there named M. l'Abbé Lavialle, vicar-general of Honolulu, his cathedral city.

From that hour, the very reverend dignitary reposed under the embowering shade of his laurels; contented with himself and his work, he became an amiable sort of fellow, and relaxed the strictness of his watch over the hours of arrival and departure as observed by his priestly crew.

Loubère had come to him during the first honeymoon of his enjoyment of his new dignity. The vicar-general of Honolulu received him very graciously and cordially.

"You are a fine fellow," he said. "What a grenadier you might have made! And so you were a curé, were you? My good sir, you mistook your calling. You're from the Pyrenees, you say? Bravo! They are splendid chaps, those mountaineers. I sup-

pose you know your alphabet; because, if you do, that's all that a compositor requires. Cheer up!—Success!"

One evening, Loubère was leaving the place, after a hard day's work, in great need of air and amusement, when he observed, all huddled up on a bench, a very short woman, who sate motionless, in a strange attitude, as though she had just fainted. Looking at her very closely, he recognized a person known in the place as employed in some adjoining bleach-works, whom we will call Marion la Champise. Our mother Nature is capricious at times, and exhibits here and there strange victims of her freaks—small, timid, feeble creatures, one of whom is generally to be found in every workshop, the sickly specimen of the flock. Such was Marion among the bleachers. They were young, strong, and healthy; she was old, weak, and frail. So she was defenceless. Only hunchbacks, among her physical class, are gifted with powers of retort. She was the butt of the rest; the subject of continual laughter, the wretched victim of a thousand cruel jests.

On the day that Loubère found her shivering at the entrance to the building, like another Hagar on the confines of the wilderness, it was not merely derision that had made her heart ache, but a formal discharge from her employer. A stronger and more active hand had turned up. Compassion has little weight when interest is at stake; at least, so Marion found, to her cost, as she sat there, out of place, out of money, and with nowhere to hide her head.

"What on earth are you doing there, Marion?" asked Loubère.

No answer, but a sigh—a sigh, however, most eloquent.

"Have you been dismissed?"

"Yes, sir; and there's nothing for me now but starvation."

"Heartless creatures! Tell me, would you like to be housekeeper?"

"That I should, sir!"

And her eyes, which were not ungentle, turned towards her eccentric friend as though she meant them to speak the thanks her lips refused to utter.

"You won't be lodged like a princess, let me inform you. I have a kitchen, sitting-room, and an inner room where you might sleep. In the day you can employ yourself as you like; in the evening there's the dinner to get ready. If that suits you, we'll set off home at once."

Marion rose silently, and, like a dog fondled by his master, followed humbly and submissively behind her new friend.

"Here you are, then, enthroned as queen," said Loubère, when he had reached his cinquième. "All I want you to do is to make good soup and keep out dust. I'm a bit of a bear; you won't get many words out of me; but as a proof that I respect you as an honest woman, we'll eat at the same table."

Marion began to think she was dreaming; however, she soon made herself at home. She was wonder-

fully clean, a very tolerable cook, a good marketer, a capital bargainer, got the best provisions at the cheapest rate, kept her master's linen in good condition—was, in a word, all that Loubère could possibly require, and more than repaid his benevolence.

A host of projects had found their way into his original brain from the time of his becoming one of the staff of the fortunate Honolulu dignitary. He was well aware, that for a priest to apply to the authorities for permission to marry was an utter absurdity; yet, expelled from the duties of his office as he had been, and driven to pick up a livelihood in the best way he could, he felt strangely disposed to look out for a wife, and resented bitterly the unrighteous enactments which stood in his way.

"My dear fellow," he said, one evening, to Julio; "I have got a bit of news that will astonish you, I think."

"Well, what is it?"

"I'm going to marry."

"What a cram!"

"I am, I tell you."

"Nonsense; you're laughing. Whom, may I make bold to inquire?"

"Well, a woman, at all events."

"What family does she belong to?"

"None at all."

"Is she a foundling?"

"Yes; her name shows that."

"Ah! what may it be?"

"Marion la Champise."

"Very good; a pretty name enough. And how old is your Dulcinea?"

"Guess."

"Twenty?"

"More. Guess again."

"Thirty?"

"More yet."

"Forty?"

"More."

"Fifty?"

"A little more."

"Why, you're going to marry some stupid old woman."

"Not by any means. Old she is, I admit; but as for stupid, you're out there. She can make first-rate soup."

"Come, Loubère, that's enough; I'm tired of your rubbish. Let's talk of something else. How is the illustrious honorary canon, and vicar-general, and director of the printing establishment of the Boulevard Pigale?"

"He's the best fellow in the world, and is in first-rate health. But, Julio, nonsense apart, I want to have a bit of serious talk with you. Positively, I mean to get married."

And his tone of voice convinced his friend that he was in earnest.

"My dear boy," said Julio, "don't go and commit yourself to any such wild notion. No mayor will hear of it. More than that, too, even though you may not be

exercising your functions, still I am sure you respect your office too highly to create a scandal."

"It's just because I know that the municipal authorities will have nothing to say to me, that I want to bring them to the point, and compel them to explain themselves. I mean to go to all the tribunals, to the emperor himself, if need be. It's a most important question, and I should like to have it well ventilated and finally settled. It involves one higher still,—the liberty of the subject. Pray believe me, Marion's fine eyes have very little to do with the matter. She is horribly ugly; more ugly than I could possibly describe. You know, old fellow, that touching memory of a crushed-out love that darkened my earlier life. It was an attachment which no one else could, by any possibility, supplant; certainly not my friend Marion—a lady little likely to enchant a much less fastidious taste than mine. However, I want to try the question pro bono publico, so now you understand."

"You're raving, Loubère. I may not judge you, or seek to influence you, otherwise than by my advice. But, frankly, I would not spare that to divert you from this scheme of yours, which would draw public attention down upon you, and set the journals mad with excitement."

"Pretty much I mind your religious newspapers, as dumb as drums with holes in them; who cares a button for the *Catholic Atlas*, for instance, and the other rotten old papers, that are obliged to abuse somebody in order to force themselves into passing notice.

From the day they lost their chief, they have been dead and buried. Ah! that was a man with whom I should like to have measured my strength, and braved his abuse. But as for the rowing of the rest of 'em, it's not worthy the honour of being named: why, I should laugh at it—simply laugh at it."

"I believe you're hardly the sort of fellow to be very much in awe of them."

"Not exactly."

"Well, then, if you mean to persist in your wild idea—which I hope is not your purpose—you ought first to write to Rome and apply to the Pope to absolve you from your vow of celibacy. That's your duty as a priest."

"My dear Julio, I'm no longer a priest. Since I have left Rome, I've seen too much of the priesthood to retain much respect for it, or much opinion of its regard for discipline. With reference to the faith, all I can say is, you are a lucky fellow to have preserved it in your own breast. As for me, it has either left me, or fearfully lessened its hold upon me. All things considered, I am thankful to be out of the whole concern. It's a horrible thing to teach others, and doubt at the same time what you teach."

"What, Loubère? Do you mean to tell me that if you were called once more to unfold the Gospel of Christ to the poor and unlettered, you would begin by questioning its truth?"

"No, no, dear Julio—a thousand times no. It's not with reference to the Gospel that I raise the doubt, but

with reference to human additions to it. However, face to face with the convictions of a man like yourself, my scepticism recoils. Possibly, one day I shall find out how to separate the false from the true, the human from the divine, and in this task you're the only man who can help me. At present, however, I have other fish to fry. As to appealing to Rome, that's your business; as a journalist, you can show up, in proper style, in your columns, the evils of the present system, while I confine my attention to the civil tribunals. We must have this question settled in the heart of Paris, that it may go through the world. You understand that my personal interest in the matter is merely nominal. But, if I can but manage to start the idea, it will travel with its own velocity, while, by thus anticipating the future, and preparing the way to a better and happier state of church discipline, I shall feel that I have acted wisely and well."

"You understand, Loubère, I agree with you thoroughly on this question. But do you think it time yet to work it?"

"To work it—yes. To settle it—no. You sow wheat in November, and wait seven months before reaping it. Just so in human life—ages are made up of months. Cast the thought into the furrow of the future, it will have fruitful produce in God's good time."

The two friends parted, and Julio told Louise of Loubère's eccentric project.

"He is mad," she said. "Poor fellow!"

"A very generous madness, then," he answered. "He was just as mad when he went to Rome, and worked night and day spending his last sou in his efforts to set me free. All liberators are mad, I suppose. But we may well love and bless them whether they are or no."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OFFICIATING DEACON.

ANY one writing the biographies of the successive officiating deacons in the churches of Paris during the last thirty years, would find that he had undertaken a singular task. As the spectator sees the curé ascend the altar steps on a high festival day, with two white-haired priests on either side of him, arrayed in golden dalmatiques as gorgeous as his own chasuble, he realizes only the distinguished pastor of a church like St. Roch or the Madeleine, present to exercise the highest functions of his ministry, and attended by two clerical dignitaries scarcely less exalted than himself. Vain delusion! they are poor wretches who won't get anything to eat on Sunday till after one o'clock mass, and on week days, not till noon.

Ah, fair lady, addicted to late hours, you little think that in order to contrive a mass for you on Sundays, and even in the week, at a time which may fall in with your arrangements, your indolence, your nights spent in party-going,—those miserable slaves will have to endure the tortures of semi-starvation. Were I a

woman, I would never set my foot in a church at such a service—my heart would ache too much from the thought of the suffering I should occasion; while my conscience would tell me that my indolent selfishness was an offence to God.

Sometimes, these officiating deacons are poor priests, banished for their political opinions,—Poles, seeking an asylum among their French brethren; or Spaniards, involved in difficulties at home, arising from various sources, and driven to earn their bread in another country,—or ill-starred victims of Jesuit animosity. Once a scholar of highest repute and European celebrity quitted the society, and became, and to this day continues to be, one of these humble clergy in a Paris church. The companion of Arago and Humboldt is destined yet to die in his obscure retreat, in spite of the honour that he brings to the cloth by his scientific publications.

As a rule, they are men of very considerable intellectual attainments and lofty aspirations; men who have been compromised by a rash utterance of their sentiments or involved in a theological dispute; inflexible characters, ill-disposed to bow before some imperious dignitary; writers who have written too boldly; or scribblers (at times) who have bothered the world to death with their scribbling; with various other classes and characters. Such men, after having been well scolded and abused, and duly sent off to a penitential retreat, turn up eventually in this all but menial office, and may be seen sweeping sacristies in long black

gowns, assisting at innumerable ceremonies, and supplying generally any chance vacancy that may occur in any particular place on any particular occasion.

Such is the life they are doomed to live; now arrayed in cloth of gold, velvet, moiré antique, or rich broidered vestments; now feeding on the scantiest possible allowance capable of sustaining life, yet the largest their wretched pittance enables them to procure.

The seminary lad, duly ordained and licensed as a parish curate, is their superior, veterans though they are. He has a prospect of promotion—of being second curate one day, then first, and some time or other a dignitary of the church. The officiating deacons, on the other hand, see their hopes of advancement diminish the older they grow. They quit, perhaps, the splendours of the Madeleine or St. Clotilde, for the humbler shrine of La Villette, Grenelle, or even Mont Rouge, while ere long their despised ashes will moulder with those of the lowest outcasts in a common grave at Ivry or Clichy-la-Garenne.

They are, indeed, greatly to be pitied, though occasionally there are among them men qualified for no worthier post, or others, utterly indifferent to their lot, and willing to be forgotten, who cannot possibly interest anybody, because they take no interest in themselves, and are entirely destitute of everything approaching to self-respect.

It will be in the reader's recollection that the Archbishop of Paris had nominated Julio second chaplain of the Lycée of St. Louis. M. de Baraminos, however,

yielding to the pressure that was brought to bear upon him from all sides, urged so strongly one morning at the council table, the dissatisfaction this appointment had created in the religious world, that the cardinal was thoroughly alarmed. It is not easy to defy the opinion of one's friends; to do so, requires no little moral courage.

"Then where shall I put him?" said his eminence. "I must do something for him; he's not a bad priest after all."

To which the promoter, who had been well tutored by the Jesuits, briskly replied that he thought it would be honour enough to make him an officiating deacon.

"Well, so be it: settle the matter in that way for the present; I'll see what more I can do for him by-and-by."

The same day, an official notification was sent to Julio at the Rue de la Barouillère, to the following effect:—

"M. L'ABBÉ,—

"AN unfavourable report of your antecedents having reached the archbishop, his eminence feels reluctantly compelled to cancel his recent appointment, made on the strength of the too partial recommendation of the Bishop of ——, whom you have probably misled as to your true character. You are appointed officiating deacon in the church of Notre-Dame des Champs; and his eminence desires you to understand that this is the

only post to which he has it in his power to nominate you.

"I ought not to conceal from you that even this is a favour; and a favour which will be immediately withdrawn, with all power to officiate in the diocese, should you venture to lay yourself open to any further reproach.

(Signed, &c.) "DE BARAMINOS, V.G.,
"*Promoter.*"

Julio was not at all surprised by the contents of this letter, nor did he feel on receiving it the slightest regret or indignation. Louise, however, cried bitterly, thoroughly understanding what had led to this new persecution.

"Don't trouble yourself about them, dearest," he said; "they are but the instruments of a merciful Providence, after all. The bruised grape doesn't rail against the wine-press. We profess to be Christians, let us exhibit a real Christian spirit."

"You are brave indeed, Julio, to submit so cheerfully to such utter degradation."

"It is that very abasement that makes us strong, Louise. The oak bough springs up with greater vigour to the skies after having been violently held down. The more the bow is bent, the farther flies the arrow."

"That's all very pretty; and I suppose it's quite right and proper to say it, by way of consolation; but what I wish to observe is, that if I were a man—especially, if I were the Abbé Julio de la Clavière—I'd see them

far enough before I'd go and be an officiating deacon at that little wooden shed, dignified as the Church of Notre-Dame des Champs."

"The abode of our Saviour at Nazareth was humbler than that, Louise. What matters it in God's sight whether I am Pope, archbishop, or deacon? I am but an officiating minister in each case; only the last position is less likely to make me proud and conceited than the other two; that's all the difference. My own dear sister, you are trying to lead your brother into temptation, though you don't know it."

Louise smiled.

"Well, I suppose you are right," she said; "I am a woman, and so I have a woman's spirit. He must be great who is willing to be small."

CHAPTER IX.

THE DISCUSSIONS AT ST. EUSTACE.

AMONG the warmest admirers of Julio's talents and ability was a M. de Leich, originally a barrister of the Imperial Court at T——. Thanks to considerable interest, he had met with rapid promotion; and, at the time of Julio's arrival in Paris, belonged to the Court of Cassation in that city.

He received our hero very warmly, though he almost failed to recognize in him the young priest who had achieved such a brilliant reputation in his early home, so effectually had sorrow wrought upon him, like the hot sun upon the autumn grapes. He had grown old and grave; his original impulsiveness had mellowed down; his spirit had been chastened and purified in the furnace of affliction.

M. de Leich soon felt a growing esteem for him, and the two became intimate friends. He often took him home with him to a charming country residence which he had built, between Courbevoie and Puteaux. Scarcely

a Sunday passed but Julio, after escorting his sister to Madame de Tourabel's, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, indulged his passionate love of rural scenery in this pleasant retreat.

The magistrate was worthy, in the highest sense of the term: he was an earnest, upright Christian. His religious opinions were calm and tolerant—completely devoid of that rancorous bigotry which identifies love to God with hatred towards those who differ from the bigot. His wealth and position invested him with considerable importance; and as his house was in the Rue du Jour, near the church of St. Eustace, he had been at once appointed one of the vestrymen of his parish.

It was now 1861, and the Advent festival was fast approaching. The importance which Parisians attach to the preaching on great occasions, such as Advent and Lent, especially in churches like St. Roch, St. Sulpice, the Madeleine, and St. Eustace, is well known. Three or four years back, an able Dominican had been appointed to preach at St. Eustace on the present occasion. Meanwhile, M. de Leich was extremely anxious to see Julio in one of the more conspicuous pulpits of the city; and, with that view, spoke to the curé of his church on the subject. There was some little difficulty in starting: it was a bold measure to take up a man who had been proceeded against by the most renowned of the Roman orders, and whom the archbishop himself had appointed to the humblest post in the diocese. However, M. de Leich managed to

dispose of every scruple as it arose, and succeeded in getting Julio appointed to preach at St. Eustace, during Advent, every Thursday evening, leaving the Sunday open to the Dominican. It was agreed between the three that the arrangement should be kept a profound secret till the lectures commenced, in order to avoid, as long as possible, the excitement which it would occasion in ultramontane circles. They were prudent enough, also, to omit Julio's name from the notice on the church door, announcing the day and hour when the series would begin; contenting themselves with a simple intimation that "discussions, intended especially for men, would take place every Thursday at the parish church during the coming Advent, at eight o'clock in the evening."

The Abbé Denis, however, who was "told off" as Julio's bodyguard, and who watched him incessantly, contrived, in some inscrutable way, to ascertain, about eight or ten days before the time, that these discussions were to be conducted by the great enemy of the Jesuits. It will be easy to imagine the dismay which the news created in that illustrious fraternity. It spread with wonderful rapidity. "That object of universal reprobation, a runaway convict, was about to exhibit his talents in one of the most celebrated pulpits in Paris and eclipse the Jesuit star in Notre Dame!" At first, no one believed it. But as soon as it was ascertained beyond all doubt that, on the first Thursday in Advent, this most objectionable individual had actually held forth to the unanimous and enthusiastic delight of

a select audience, recruited, through M. de Leich's exertions, from among magistrates, professors, and literary men,—the fury of the opposition party knew no bounds.

The question suggested itself at once, what was to be done? It was resolved to appeal to the archbishop; to make a very grievous and very ferocious lamentation, and to spread, from pole to pole, the tidings of this unparalleled effrontery.

The cardinal was literally besieged with visitors. They came in shoals, from duchesses and marchionesses to priests of every order under the sun. Of course, the Jesuits were in full force. His eminence and his vicars-general grew weary of their life.

The only answer the memorialists obtained was to the effect that the curés of Paris had possessed, from time immemorial, the right of choosing their preachers at Advent and Lent: of course, submitting their choice to the archbishop; that the curé of St. Eustace had satisfied this form in reference to the Dominican whom he had selected for that occasion; that his eminence had no jurisdiction over any arrangements apart from the principal ministration; and, lastly, that the Abbé Julio, being neither suspended nor interdicted by his bishop, could not possibly be refused the right to exercise his ministerial functions.

This reply, of course, was far from satisfactory to the zealous petitioners. They went so far as to murmur against the decision arrived at, and, if report is to be believed, even insulted one of the archiepiscopal secre-

taries, by telling him that there was an authority at Rome higher than that of any archbishop, and that to it they meant to appeal, as justice had been denied them at the palace. To which piece of impertinence the secretary replied with quiet firmness. He assured them that they were mistaken in their views; that the Pope was not archbishop of Paris, and had nothing to do with the administration of dioceses, except in extreme cases of general appeal.

It was, indeed, a thing to be well cried about, to see the great bulk of the Paris clergy still infected with the heresy of Gallicanism. For so the ultramontane writers and journalists styled the doctrines which had been held by Bossuet, Luzerne, Frayssinous, Cheverus, Affre, and Sibour: and, in short, by almost all the French bishops up to the present hour.

Meanwhile, the St. Eustace discussions went on, to the great distress of the Jesuit partisans, who had reckoned upon the timidity of the archbishop. They became famous, and recalled the palmiest days of Lacordaire at Notre Dame, before that illustrious orator sullied his reputation by assuming the robe of St. Dominic so inseparably associated with the horrors of the Inquisition.

True, it was the thoughtful philosopher who, in that way, sought for a protecting shelter while he matured and divulged his views. What he dared not say as the abbé, he might venture on as a Dominican. Hence the step which so many have regretted.

On the other hand, the *Catholic Liberal* created a

positive storm in the ultramontane world. Ably written, and in full knowledge of the needs of the Church, it reviewed and demolished the fallacious theories of the bigoted party. At once cutting and quiet in style, and opposing to impassioned sophisms calm and irresistible logic, it lashed, day after day, the unhappy advocates of the tiara, and consoled the large majority who felt keenly the actual degradation which the Church was undergoing.

Of course, the sectarian foes plotted, with unremitting eagerness, to ruin the journalist. They knew well, that having lost that able chief who was the only man likely to give a name and reputation to their press, they had no one left to cope with Julio. So they prevailed upon two or three of the bishops in the south to forbid their clergy, by letters, which were carefully posted up in Paris, to take in, or in any way patronize the *Catholic Liberal.* They tried their utmost to get it into the Prohibitory Index, and contrived to obtain an order interdicting its admission into the Roman States, lest it should bring with it the Gallican infection.

Nor did the illustrious Denis rest on his oars. His proceedings were of another character altogether. He enrolled a few miserable creatures, kept alive by charity, and contrived a scheme which, by the notoriety it would occasion, was to force the archbishop to prohibit the discussions.

On the Thursday of the second week of Advent (the season begins on All Saints' Day), he reached the

church in good time, accompanied by about one hundred men, whom he distributed in groups to the best advantage, through the nave and aisles. They had been well instructed in what they were to do. Plied with plenty of wine, at his expense, from the wine-stores round the church, these somewhat original actors prepared for a demonstration, encouraged by the promise of a five-franc piece if the thing went off well. Accordingly, as soon as Julio commenced, they joined in with a violent cough, began to talk loud enough to drown his voice, and soon succeeded in creating a disturbance; some of them raising the cry, "Down with that man," while others shouted, "Success to the orator,"—the object being to feign a struggle between the preacher's friends and opponents. The confusion was terrible. In France, when any shouting is going on, every one shouts—honest men and scamps alike. Julio having made a vain attempt to silence the throng, was compelled to leave the pulpit. The efforts of Denis were crowned with success.

The disturbance, which created immense excitement, was marvellously explained by the ultramontanists. Rome was informed that Julio had uttered such monstrous sentiments, that the congregation rose as one man, and refused to hear any more of his blasphemies; that he had not only railed against the temporal power of the Pope, but also abused the spiritual. The faction against him became so powerful from that hour, that the archbishop, dreading any further scenes of a similar character, reluctantly interfered. He sent for the curé

of St. Eustace, and, while he gave a willing and generous testimony of his full belief in Julio's orthodoxy, represented the undesirableness of continuing the discussions, and requested him to announce that they would no longer be held.

CHAPTER X.

AN EVENING PARTY AT MADAME DE TOURABEL'S.

On reaching Paris, Julio had written to Verdelon, telling him of Louise's and his own rescue. A reply had come, which the writer imagined to be couched in very affectionate terms; but which was, in reality, full of unmeaning phrases, utterly devoid of heart or interest, and the true character of which Louise detected at once. It was the final death blow to her unhappy love, and left her resolved from that day forward to devote herself entirely to promoting her brother's happiness. To identify herself with him more and more, to develope her own intelligence by contact with his, to engage in steady reading that she might help him in his work—such was her plan, and she pursued it eagerly.

One day, however, Madame de Tourabel told her, in utter ignorance of the interest which the news would create, that Verdelon was married. Up to that moment she had fancied she was free from her infatuation. On hearing the tidings, however, she became conscious of a secret hope that had been lurking within her breast

as though unwilling to depart, and which, even in the presence of that decisive intelligence, she found it hard to expel without severe suffering.

Moreover, the constant persecution and slanderous reports which were adopted against her brother had a most distressing effect upon herself. She was a prey to unceasing suffering of mind, and her health declined daily. The affair at St. Eustace was a terrible shock to her, and even Julio himself felt it very keenly, detecting the hateful conspiracy out of which it had sprung.

On the following Sunday, while he was dining at Puteaux with his friend M. de Leich, Louise spent the evening in the Faubourg St. Honoré. The party was small, but among the arrivals were "M. and Madame de Verdelon;" for our friend Augustus had signalized his marriage by adopting this little ornamental prefix to his family name.

Louise started up as though she had been struck by a thunder-bolt. She hadn't the faintest idea that "the happy couple" were in Paris. Pale and trembling, she sank back again into her easy-chair, covering her face with her hands to hide her confusion.

"How do you do, cousin?" said the baroness, to the newly-married wife.

The customary forms of politeness were interchanged. Madame de Verdelon was one of the De Tourabel family. She was an only daughter, and had brought two millions in landed property to the ambitious barrister. The quondam friend of Julio, and advocate of

his interests in opposition to the Jesuits, had become their most enthusiastic friend. They had given him a wealthy wife, it is true; but when ambition has induced a man to trample out an honourable love, and fling from him the heart he had won, what further change in his mind and feelings is it not capable of effecting!

Madame de Tourabel went through the various introductions requisite.

"Mademoiselle Julio de la Clavière," she said, pointing to Louise.

"Ah, exactly! I've heard of her," said the young lady, in an embarrassed tone of voice.

Verdelon maintained his cheerful and composed demeanour as a happy bridegroom, with that ease and success which his profession had taught him to assume in every position of perplexity. Men like him are as much masters of the situation in the drawing-room as in the assize-court.

Louise, however, had not had his advantages. No school had taught her how to diguise her feelings and play the hypocrite. She made a quiet inclination of her head, took leave of her hostess, and went home.

"Mademoiselle de la Clavière seems ill," said the baroness, as soon as the door had closed. "I shall send and inquire after her to-morrow. She comes from Languedoc; a fellow-countrywoman of yours, by the way," she added, addressing herself to Verdelon.

"Yes, I knew her brother," was his reply. "Indeed, I pleaded for him once against the Jesuits in an unfortunate affair, which the recollection of early friendship

induced me to take up; as it was a hopeless case, of course I lost it."

"He is a most talented man," said the baroness.

"Yes, he is clever—got the gift of the gab."

"A very disagreeable thing has just happened to him at St. Eustace."

"So I understand; it will do him considerable harm."

At that moment the Countess de Vezère, the penitent of De Baraminos, and the warm partisan of the Jesuits, entered the room.

"We were speaking of the sad affair at St. Eustace," said Madame de Tourabel, continuing the conversation.

"A disgraceful affair, rather," rejoined the countess; "there never was such a scandal in a Paris church before. But his eminence is so lenient,—weak, one might almost say. He allows too much latitude to his clergy, and the consequence is, they are everlastingly getting into scrapes, crying up Gallicanism and patronizing the enemies of the Church and Pope. They'll soon come to call his Holiness M. de Rome, as an archbishop designated him in the last century. The Priests here are not in good repute in the Eternal City."

"You surprise me, countess. I fancied that the French clergy ranked high in the Pope's estimation."

"The French clergy—yes; because they are devoted to his interests, but not those in Paris; otherwise, there wouldn't have been a curé amongst them ready to encourage an enemy of Rome and the Jesuits, like Julio de la Clavière."

"Stay, stay, countess; I never heard the abbé speak

otherwise than most respectfully of the Holy Father, and I know he is greatly distressed at his painful and critical position."

"He is against the temporal power, for all that; so he's an enemy of the Pope, and no true priest."

"I can't admit that. I have a great respect for him, and am warmly attached to his sister."

"My dear baroness, you are kind-heartedness itself, but you have been deceived. Men of his stamp never show themselves in their true colours to persons like yourself. But I do assure you, that you are the only person in respectable society whom I ever heard speak a word in his favour."

"Why, you don't even know the man. I'll introduce him to you one of these days."

"Horror of horrors! I should look upon it as high treason," said the countess laughing; then resuming her previous gravity, added, "I don't know him, you say; no, thank God I don't, but Rome does. He has a tolerably wide-spread reputation. What do you think of his breaking into a nunnery?—an exploit worthy of Garibaldi, that. What have you got to say of his connexion with revolutionary agents at Rome, the conspirators who got him out of his dungeon? Can you venture to defend his furious article against the temporal power? 'Well known,' indeed—I should just think he was. Why, my dear friend, you have espoused a bad cause, in undertaking his defence. Your kind heart is your best excuse; but it does not do to encourage free-thinkers for all that."

"I don't encourage him. At the same time, he seems to me so sensible and moderate in his views, in which you must acknowledge that he has some excuse in the violent reaction against our Government, on the part of the authorities at Rome."

"Then our Government should give back to the Pope what has been plundered from him. It can do it, and it ought to do it. Look here, my dear friend, it's not the thing to trifle with principles: you're far too indulgent. Give up this brother and sister. She's almost as bad as he is. What was she doing in Italy?"

"What was she doing? Don't you know the history of that business? Why, she was kidnapped."

"Kidnapped!—ridiculous. Who on earth got you to believe that vile fiction? You've been very incorrectly informed, to say the least of it."

"Quite mistaken. However, I'll give in about the brother. Perhaps you're right in his case. I find him myself a little too advanced in his ideas."

"He's another Passaglia—a Gavazzi."

"Be it so, if you like; but his sister I will stand up for. She is a dear girl, as you would say if you knew her. So gentle, and yet so clever."

"Clever enough, I believe you. She writes in her brother's paper, I understand. You may rely upon it, she's as bad as he is. All original thinkers are more or less dangerous. Besides that, I know enough against the young lady to make me indifferent to the honour of her acquaintance. Stick to the regular clergy, they

are the only body that have real priests among them. Every departure from the pious traditions of days gone by is unsafe. It was a long time before I found out this; for I had my little leanings, myself, towards the new ideas, as they are called; but they have all been dispelled by the holy Jesuits, whom I have constantly met at my mother's. The fact is, their cause ought to be exclusively espoused. They are the centre and support of the ecclesiastical arch: the complete triumph of their power will be the salvation of the Church. Let me tell you, between ourselves, I have left the Abbé de Baraminos altogether. He is too Gallican for my fancy, besides which, he's one of the seculars, and they know nothing about the guidance of souls."

"I've heard it whispered, from time to time, that your friends are slightly ambitious."

"Ambitious, my dear creature! Yes, ambitious for the honour of the Pope, the maintenance of his rights, and the glory of God. As far as they themselves are concerned, they haven't a single worldly desire."

"People are afraid of them."

"Because slanderous tongues, an unprincipled press, and vicious literature, have so misrepresented and calumniated them."

"Well, I must acknowledge that."

And, turning to Verdelon, she asked him whether they hadn't plenty of Jesuits at T——.

"Yes—great numbers. They have a splendid college there."

"What an immense deal of good they do—don't they?" appealed the countess.

"They do, indeed, madame."

As the countess was taking her leave, she said to her friend, in a whisper,—

"Don't get mixed up with these two—that's a dear creature. I am only advising you for your good. The fact is, our people are surprised at you. You'll finish up with getting the cold shoulder, and displeasing your numerous friends."

This little speech did its work. It was a quiet hint to Madame de Tourabel to withdraw her countenance from the enemies of the Jesuits.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MARRIAGE OF PRIESTS.

THE priest-workman, in the Boulevard Pigale, had followed up his singular design. He took good care to have it thoroughly understood that he was a priest, when he left his marriage papers at the Mairie. Meanwhile, the mayor had been enlightened as to the whole affair; and on the day that Loubère presented himself in his Sunday best, with a select few from the printing shop as witnesses, and the blushing beauty hanging on his arm, the civil authority declined to proceed in the matter to the great disgust of the bride who looked at the whole affair as thoroughly serious.

This was just what the bridegroom wanted. He applied for the refusal in writing, and, with this document in his possession, proceeded to lodge his appeal at the court of the Seine.

Whilst the necessary preliminary measures were being taken, and intense excitement was being aroused in the printing-shop, Loubère, who was anxious to render the proceedings as conducive as possible to the

interest he had at heart, forwarded a communication to Julio for insertion in his journal, accompanied by the following note:—

"My dear Friend,—

"I enclose a letter which, please, publish in your columns without delay. I will hold myself responsible for its contents by putting my name to it. So, all you have to do, is to give it a prominent place. I'm sure you won't refuse me.

"Ever yours,

"Loubere."

"*To the Editor of the* Catholic Liberal.

"Sir,—

"I am a priest of the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, and have officiated in the dioceses of Chambèry and T——. For reasons more political than religious, and connected with the interminable question of the Papal sovereignty, the archbishop of Chambèry has thought fit to withdraw my licence. Driven out of the priesthood, I have been compelled to cast about for means of obtaining a livelihood. My master began His life in a workshop, and closed it in the discharge of His office. I commenced mine in the ministry, and end it in the shop. I don't complain of my lot—a lot dignified by Him Whom I serve, and rendered honourable by many of His servants, who have wrought with their hands in their own support while they ministered to others. So I am in good company, and I am almost

inclined to believe that the Church will scarcely recover her ancient strength, except by returning to her ancient self-denial.

"Before that happy consummation arrives,—a consummation which I never hope to witness myself,—I wish to point out to your readers a glaring injustice of which I, and many like me, are the victims.

"I am not going to inquire whether the bishops who have deprived myself and others of our ministerial rights can be justified in what they have done;—I have no intention of raising the question whether or not they have acted under passionate excitement; whether they have brought to bear on our case all that thoughtful consideration which justice and charity require; nor yet whether they have, or have not, observed the canonical laws intended from the earliest times to protect the weak against the strong. Indeed, that economy has disappeared—they are omnipotent now; and they have used their omnipotence against us. I am even willing to admit, for argument's sake, that they are right in what they have done, and that we have been very properly deprived of our licences.

"But this being the case, is it not unreasonable to continue depriving us of a civil and social right, refused in the first instance, the better to qualify us for undertaking duties which we are no longer permitted to discharge?

"Why is the Church less liberal to us who are now deprived of our functions, than she is to Catholic priests in Greece, to the priests of Mount Lebanon, and the

various Eastern communions in allegiance to the Pope, whom she permits to marry, but retains in office?

"I am not going to discuss here the advantages which would accrue to the Church from the entire abolition of celibacy; nor am I going to revert to the numerous evil results, as recorded in episcopal registers, of this most objectionable restriction. I will suppose that it works admirably in every case but ours. Yet are we the less Christians, children of the Church, because we are debarred from exercising the office which once belonged to us? Though they strip us of the honours of the priesthood, they cannot take away our orders; for they declare that they are indestructible. Meanwhile, the vow of celibacy is of an entirely different character. Not even the highest ecclesiastical authority can divest us of what is in its essence sacramental; but nothing could be easier than to restore us our rights as citizens after depriving us, whether justly or unjustly, of our rights as priests.

"The present state of things is nothing short of a disgrace to Catholicism. Men who have been driven out of their ministerial position, and, consequently, from the guardianship of ecclesiastical authority, contract alliances which the State refuses to recognize, and the offspring of which are denied the rights of birth, and have no legal claim to their parents' property. I ask, is this just or right?

"Moreover, it is well known that out of every hundred interdicted priests, there are ninety-five whose morals are irreproachable, but who have been guilty of

what is termed insubordination, in evincing political opinions of too developed a character. Priests know well that they have only got to cringe to their bishop, pull devotedly in his boat, and display enthusiastic zeal on special occasions, and their private characters are safe from too curious scrutiny. Our duty, therefore, is to approach the sovereign Pontiff, whose benevolence and justice are so conspicuous, with the prayer that he would interest himself in these men, whose case is so deserving of his sympathy.

"Failing a general measure, the notoriety of which might, perhaps, be inexpedient, wouldn't it be well if the bishops of the more important dioceses—Paris, for instance, the refuge of the greater number of these interdicted priests—were to take the initiative by applying privately to Rome for a dispensation in such cases under such circumstances.

"It is a right the Popes have always claimed and constantly exercised. There are many instances in bygone times in which scions of noble families, whose eldest brothers have died without issue, they themselves being priests, have applied for permission to secularize themselves by marriage, in order that they might hand down their princely name and fortune. We are only outcasts of the lowest order, it is true, but our souls are as precious in God's sight as those of princes and patricians. We ought to inspire the same interest in bishops sprung from our order, and who, moreover, are incessantly talking of the perfect equality of all men before God. Let me ask, as a religious question, is it of more

importance that high-born families should be perpetuated, than that a multitude of inoffensive children should obtain their rights of birth?

"I feel that I have handled this most important subject very imperfectly. I can only add my earnest conviction that it is high time that the scandal was abolished. The greater the number of priests allowed to resume their position in society and to contract marriage, the greater will be the respect accorded to those who, declining the offered permission, retain their functions and their vows together.

"No one is better qualified than yourself, sir, to espouse the cause of this unfortunate class, and to help them, if possible, towards the attainment of their object. No slight proof of this interest on your part will be afforded by your insertion of this letter in your generous columns. To intercede for us is to perform a truly charitable action.

"Receive, &c.,

"LOUBERE,

"*An ex-priest.*"

The letter, though impulsively, was carefully written, and reflected in no way on Rome or the episcopate. Julio hesitated for a long time before publishing it; he admitted all its statements, but doubted the expediency of raising a fresh question in the presence of so many others of the highest importance. And then the point itself,—would it not be better, he thought, to have it argued calmly and dispassionately, if it was to be

brought forward, than that it should be violently discussed by men prejudiced on either side,—the one faction thirsting after a forward movement, heedless of any overthrow that might result from obtaining it; the other, as anxious to go back to the bigoted teaching and system of Gregory VII. It was evidently a useless struggle.

However, the obligations he was under to Loubère, who, after all, merely contributed his production in the character of a correspondent for whose sentiments he was not responsible, decided him. The letter was inserted.

Of course, there was a terrible hubbub, the whole fury of which was condensed in the one sentence,—

"So the *Catholic Liberal* demands the marriage of priests."

The *Catholic Atlas* had a paragraph to the effect that the whole thing was a sham; that the sentiments of the letter were in reality those of the editor, disguised in that form, and subscribed with a fictitious name, from prudential motives.

Meanwhile, the incident itself served as a pretext for new insults. Anonymous letters were poured down upon Julio in a continuous shower, conceived in terms equally veracious and polite. Many of them were signed with initial letters, followed by the word "priest."

"Ah, my fine fellows!" said Loubère, as he read this latter collection, "you, at all events, stand in good need of being absolved from vows which you have

yourselves shaken off. I have always remarked that in clerical meetings, the most blameless priests have been those most eager in advocating a change in this law; while the others have invariably protested, thinking, by that means, to protect their individual reputation from too curious scrutiny. Oh! if their bishops were only to show them up!"

The archbishop, of course, came in for his share of violent expostulation. The most vehement remonstrances were addressed to him from all parts of France, coupled with the most energetic protests against a paper whose principles were scandalizing the Catholic world.

CHAPTER XII.

LOUBÈRE PLEADS.

THE great question of the marriage of the priests, which Loubère had brought before the civil court of the Seine, was heard amid the greatest excitement and interest. One of the most conspicuous members of the bar in Paris ranged himself on the side of liberty. He had got up various facts from the annals of the past; and showed how the secret marriages of priests continued up to the time of the Middle Ages. Arguing the question on all sides, and gathering the inferences suggested by the multitudinous evidence which he had collected, he demonstrated that the law of celibacy was inexpedient, and, as regarded the objects entertained in its institution, an utter fallacy.

Next came Loubère, on the moral and religious aspect of the question: his wild, earnest eloquence told powerfully in the crowded court.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I should not have been so rash as to undertake to plead before you, after the brilliant address you have just heard, had I not felt that my position puts into my mouth arguments which

no other could so effectually employ, because no one else can feel so acutely the injustice of the system against which this protest is entered.

"It has been shown to you that, under a social economy which since the year 1789 has been proclaiming universal liberty, there has ever been one exception to this general rule. The convict is released from the hulks, and allowed to set up for himself, and to gather round him a family circle; the brigand,—ay, and even the murderer, at times,—have had conceded to them the same privilege; it has been reserved for authority to announce, in the presence of a people justly proud of their liberties, that to the priest, and the priest alone, this boon shall never be granted.

"The fact being admitted by the first tribunal in the most civilized town in the world, what more is requisite to prove the injustice of which we complain.

"But there are other considerations which I wish to bring before you.

"The superior courts, in interdicting the priest from marriage, imagined that they were furthering the cause of religion and preventing the occurrence of possible scandals in the bosom of the Church.

"Gentlemen, this is a clever delusion, well calculated to work its way in excitable temperaments. Remember that there are wide countries where Catholicism is advancing daily, but where at the same time the marriage of priests is allowed. I might mention the United States, and the Protestant kingdoms of Europe, more especially England. Does the priest avail him-

self of his privilege in these free countries, and abandon his ministry? By no means; he remains true to his voluntary vow; while his constancy secures him the most unfeigned respect. And, if you tell me that in the event of this point being carried, France would be deluged with a polluted flood of men repudiating the priesthood, I answer, so much the better. The leaven will be purged away. What is left behind will be pure and good, and will merit and receive the greater reverence. Thus, Catholicism will gain instead of lose, and the last vestiges of intolerance will be removed.

"But I go still further.

"We have become so accustomed in France to the ignorant persuasion, if I may be allowed the expression, that celibacy among the clergy is indispensable, that any interference with the idea we regard as simply preposterous. 'All very well for the Protestant clergy to marry,' is a common remark; 'but the Catholic priest, who is required to confess, must remain single.' Such is the traditional notion: a more unsound one could not be imagined.

"Is it possible, that those who hold to this belief are ignorant that there are conspicuous sections of English Catholics who are not by any means bound by this restriction?—quite the contrary;—whose priests are positively compelled to marry, while they receive at the same time, with the hearty consent of the faithful, customary confessions. Indeed, experience proves that men who know something of life, and have had some little practical experience of its ways, are better adapted

for spiritual guidance than mere untutored neophytes or ignorant bachelor recluses.

"These things being so—and their truth cannot be disputed—why, I ask, why does human law persist in an obstinate opposition to this most righteous demand?

"Gentlemen, you are maintaining a wretched prejudice, a miserable practical fallacy in the world. You give force to the most weighty objections ever urged against the clergy. Were priests not hindered from marriage, they would marry in shoals. This prejudice is universal; and nothing will weaken its hold on the popular mind, except an irresistible testimony, supplied by facts. As soon as it is announced that the municipal authorities are ready to sanction the civil marriage of the clergy, it will be at once fully admitted that those who keep back are all that they profess to be, and their fidelity to their original vow will be thoroughly appreciated.

"Gentlemen, we Frenchmen are far more under the dominion of Medievalism than is generally supposed, and the crisis of 1789 has but very imperfectly emancipated us. We have, it is true, proclaimed full liberty for all denominations; and the Church has none but spiritual weapons now to compel us to fidelity to our fathers' faith. The secular arm has ceased to uplift itself in aid of any who would force down belief. There were those who once raised the shout, 'believe or die—turn or burn'; but they are gone, and their tyranny has perished with them. Yet, though the civil power refuses to repeat so cruel an injustice;

though it will not kill the body, it kills the soul; for it drives into profligacy and excess, by an unrighteous enactment—it compels thousands of men to be immoral, by depriving them of their only hope of being moral.

"Gentlemen, I have done. It is for you to pronounce your verdict. Remember that, in this matter, you are bound by no legal enactment in the code. The letter from the Minister of Worship, dated January 14, 1806, cannot possibly be regarded as having the force of law: it was but a provision for the moment—the expression of an individual judgment, in no way referring to the future Every citizen has a full right to insist on the reoeal of a requirement opposed to moral interests. In this case, however, you are not called upon to deal with civil enactments, but only with religious discipline. If you insist, however, on maintaining that discipline as it stands, be consistent and go further. Give in your various municipal registers to the ecclesiastical authorities—compel Catholics to live as Catholics should. Pass laws enjoining them, under pain of death, to confess regularly, and to communicate at Easter. Either submit body and soul to the yoke of bondage, or break it altogether."

He sat down applauded; but his eloquence and arguments were equally useless. The tribunal heard and smiled, and simply and utterly rejected his application.

CHAPTER XIII.

A BROKEN TIE.

The underhand insinuations of the Countess of Vezère had told upon the Baroness de Tourabel. She saw at once that she must choose between her own society, whose praise or blame were of such moment in her estimation, and her sweet friend Louise, who had so effectually attracted and secured her affection.

As she loved her and respected Julio, the struggle was long and bitter. Moreover, she was not a little influenced by her woman's pride. Naturally, her feelings were lofty and honourable, and she resented this idea of yielding a cowardly deference to the imperious dictates of society, succumbing to its prejudices and espousing its animosities. She saw that in thus giving way, she was virtually destroying her liberty of thought and action; that she was bidding adieu to the world of noble and generous progress, and was about to sink back, at the close of her life, into an indolent supineness, an idiotic veneration of the past, and a pitiful dislike of all modern efforts to open,

for present and future ages, the golden gates of progress.

Moreover, the influence of the brother and sister had not been lost upon her; and of this she was conscious. Under their teaching, the horizon of her mental view had broadened. She was charitable, as all compassionate women of wealth and benevolence always are; but nothing more. Meanwhile, this question of charity, in its different bearings, had been closely studied by Louise since she came to Paris; and the result had been, that she had detected its stereotyped mode of exhibition for ages past, by no means in harmony with modern social needs. Julio took up the subject, and handled it powerfully in his journal. Louise read a few extracts from his article, to Madame de Tourabel; and the good sense of this excellent woman soon convinced her of the practical truth of his opinions. She had, together with her young friend, concerted schemes consistent with these new views; and these she must give up if she was to relinquish her society.

Her father was one of the most illustrious and high-born men under the old monarchy; while her husband was only the son of a general of the empire, who owed everything he had to his sword and the favour of Napoleon I. Yet, the lady had kept up all her relationships with the aristocratic old families in the Faubourg St. Germain: they flattered her pride. She had one foot in the imperial court, the other in the saloons of the past régime, a position which in some measure compensated to her for the decided mediocrity of the

alliance which her poverty had compelled her to make. With this stately set she had no disposition to break. It would have been too severe a trial for her vanity. She might have given up visiting them, certainly, only she had no fancy to shut herself up. So she kept agitating the question in her mind; realizing, on the one hand, all the baseness of the slavery she was admitting, on the other, all the advantages of the position to which she clung. Eventually she wept over her cruel fate; tore out the love of Louise from her heart, as a lover might his mistress' image; dried her tears; and submitted to the countess.

Knowing that Louise was sick, she wrote her a note expressed in a style sufficiently cool to convince her that their old relations were to continue no longer. Friendship is almost as suspicious as love; and when two or three other notes, written in the most indifferent style, were all the answer that Louise received to her own warm-hearted, affectionate letters, she felt that her friend was following in the path of her lover. In one of them she was told that M. and Mme. de Verdelon had returned to T——; still the great lady, in the whirl of society, had no leisure to call on the poor sufferer.

As soon as Louise could go out, she went to her old friend, and was coldly received. Julio's name was never mentioned, to her deep concern. Not a word of tenderness fell from the lady's lips; nor was the invitation to Sunday's quiet dinner renewed.

After staying a few minutes, Louise rose, and Madame de Tourabel made no effort to detain her.

"Good-by," said Louise, grasping convulsively the coldly offered hand; with a secret resolve never to enter that door again.

And she returned, weary, ill, and sad, to her humble home.

CHAPTER XIV.

A SCENE AT THE PROMOTER'S.

To succeed effectually in shutting the pulpit door on Julio was not enough for his implacable enemies.

Letters were sent to the provinces calling upon the bishops to spare no pains to prevent their clergy from reading that pestilent paper, the *Catholic Liberal.* As a natural result, several priests gave up the journal; some, even, who got it in a roundabout way, were denounced to the bishops. Soon its supporters were entirely confined to the laity.

All this time, the Episcopal bench endeavoured to call the attention of the Archbishop of Paris to the serious and wide-spread evils resulting from its issue.

Never were the French bishops in a more critical position than at that time. Beyond all doubt, many of them would gladly have seen his Holiness divested of his tiara, and the efforts to sustain the temporalities expiring by slow decay. But, then, there was the consideration, urged even by a declared enemy of the temporal power, that the interests of the most respect-

able of all the popes were identical with theirs, and that they were bound to support their brother bishop.

Many of them had read the *Catholic Liberal* and done full justice to the delicate skill with which Julio had handled the most intricate and difficult subjects. They felt that his duties as a religious journalist were perfectly independent of theirs, while at the same time they saw that his periodical was designed to operate most beneficially in smoothing down rancorous oppositions, clearing away mutual hostilities, and realizing a calmer and healthier state of things in the bosom of the Church.

And yet it was absolutely essential that they should manage to remain united. Doubtless, they exaggerated the obligation and were disposed to meet it with needlessly excessive concessions; still, many considerations affected by it, such as an unwillingness to countenance discord in the Church, were worthy of respect; and Julio began almost to ask himself whether he had not better recede from his invidious task, or, at all events, prosecute it with less ostentation in a quieter and more secluded sphere.

About the end of January, 1862, he received the following letter:—

"*Archbishopric of Paris.*

"M. L'ABBÉ JULIO is requested to call at the palace, at two P.M., next Tuesday, as the promoter wishes to see him on important business.

"DE BARAMINOS, V.G.,
"*Promoter.*"

Accordingly he presented himself at the appointed hour, on the appointed day, and found an ecclesiastic in the antechamber, who had been summoned like himself;—an unhappy curé of one of the parishes round Paris. An inner door opened, and the priest was admitted into the private room of the promoter.

The discussion was long and exciting; a grave charge of some description or other had been alleged, and overwhelming evidence adduced. In reply to all that was urged, the accused represented himself as unjustly calumniated, and pursued by jealousy.

At length, however, having denied the accusation time after time, he fell on his knees before the promoter, and admitted his guilt, appealing to the compassion which he trusted to experience at his hands.

"Yes, I am in fault," he cried; "but do not be hard upon me."

And he urged every consideration that his fancy could suggest, in the hope of softening his judge.

"You are so kind!" he exclaimed; which was about the last feature in the character of De Baraminos.

"My dear friend," replied the promoter, "there is no intention of destroying your prospects. We do not meditate making a public inquiry into the affair—all will be conducted as quietly as possible. Go away for a few weeks, and everything will come straight in the meantime. I will settle the affair myself."

"A thousand thanks, sir," replied the priest; then, in a low tone, to himself,—"You've only got to flatter these fellows, and you're sure to gain your end."

It was Julio's turn next.

The promoter received him with the utmost coldness. He had already begun to regret his too hasty compassion, and assumed his sternest and severest aspect.

"M. l'Abbé," he said, "your licence is withdrawn. We were exceedingly unwilling to have recourse to this measure, but we have been so besieged by letters from the various bishops, even from Rome itself,—so full of complaints about the enormity of your doctrines,—that we cannot authorize your officiating any longer in the diocese. You will, doubtless, say that you have not handled in your journal any questions of dogmatic theology. Very possibly; but at this moment the bishops have marked out a course for themselves from which it will never do to suffer the clergy to depart; and if there are some who do not share the opinions of the majority, they are not the less resolved to maintain those opinions unassailed. There are occasions when silence is wisdom; and I am sorry that, after the advice that has been given you to this effect, you have failed to comprehend that most important point. Meanwhile, understand that you are no longer permitted to officiate in this diocese:—so have the goodness to put yourself in communication with your bishop. You are not interdicted, you are simply treated as a stranger; the archbishop is not obliged to welcome every abbé who may take it in his head to come to Paris. Of course, you will consider that you have been harshly dealt with, but you owe it

entirely to the attitude you have taken in religious politics."

There was clearly no answer to this harangue. So Julio made his bow and took his leave.

Crossing the antechamber, he met a priest, who had come to see the promoter. He was a former curate of Dalbade, at T——, and had left the town for Paris, in 1848, full of Republican opinions. Arrived there, he established a review, called the *Reformer*, the principles of which were intensely radical. The periodical made some little noise; and a short passage, in which the editor saluted the red flag in the name of Catholicism, had all but led to very serious results.

He stopped Julio, for a moment's conversation, while he was waiting for his audience with the promoter. He had read some numbers of the *Catholic Liberal.*

"I am a predecessor of yours," he said, "in the task of religious journalism, but you are more in advance of your day than I was. Ah! what insults I have had! and I fancy you won't meet with a much fairer experience. Have you never known what it is to be hunted like a wild beast?"

"Pretty well," said Julio.

"Then, my dear abbé, give up that wretched work; you'll end by having every one against you—even your friends, if they are not over brave."

"I have on my side conscience, truth, the esteem of good men, and the respect even of my enemies."

"I quite believe you; but that's a precious small set

of defenders. There was a time when I deluded myself, as you are doing, with those Utopian consolations. I fought deperately against the Jesuits and Ultramontanes; but when, in the end, I found myself deserted, even by men who had backed me up—left alone, absolutely alone—I saw it was hopeless to carry on the war any longer."

"What did you do then?"

"Submitted at once. They treated me kindly; but I had to swallow many a bitter pill at their hands, and to chant a complete recantation. They made me call white black, and black white, and in a few months I had to write a big ultramontane book: it was clumsily done; but what can you expect from a man working against his conscience and personal liberty. If people don't come to regard the Pope as something decidedly superior to Gabriel, after reading my book, all I can say is, it isn't my fault. I did my best for him. Moreover, the *Catholic Atlas* did its readers the favour to insert some elaborate extracts from my performance, with remarks on the bliss the Church had experienced at seeing one of her stray flock return to the fold. It even went so far as to say that my happy restoration to the fold had affected my style beneficially; that it was more profound, more eloquent, and a lot besides; the whole thing wound up with an ascription to the Immaculate Virgin, who, according to the tenor of the article, had been good enough to rescue me from the abyss. After this guarantee of my orthodoxy, how could I fail to get on well! I have a little church at Fontenay-

aux-Roses. It is a competency, and brings with it the prospect of further advancement."

"Surely the bread it gives you is bitter, isn't it? Better break stones upon the road."

"Pleasant advice: only I fear my hands would get blistered. I have had great compunctions, I acknowledge: there have been times when I have even despised myself. But what could you expect; I don't profess to be a martyr."

"Good-by, M. le Curé; I pity you most sincerely:" and Julio left the palace.

The next day a paragraph appeared in the *Catholic Atlas*, to the following effect:—

"We learn, from a thoroughly reliable source, that ecclesiastical authority has at length withdrawn from the Abbé Julio de la Clavière, editor of the *Catholic Liberal*, his licence to officiate in the diocese. It is asserted that the paper will cease to be issued at a very early date."

M. de Leich went with all speed to Julio on reading this paragraph.

"Stay," he said, in a tone of excitement, "this is too outrageous. You have done nothing to deserve punishment; your licence is withdrawn, but you are not interdicted. You are just where this iniquitous sentence found you, as innocent as ever in the eyes of your friends. Continue amongst us. You will occupy a priesthood as dignified as that from which you have been expelled. The press is now the great rallying-point amongst men; in old times it was the banquet

and the love-feast. The further we advance, the more real sharing there is among brethren of that daily food which you and your class provide. So that yours is a sacramental work, and you in that work are the true priest. Stay, then, at your new post; and since the tendency of the day is towards a grievous materialism, it is well that there should be apostles left of simple faith and earnest love, ready to recall, with a powerful pen, the Christianity of the past, so far as it was glorious, holy, and true, and to ally it with what kindred elements shine out in the piety of the present. Should you give up journalism at this crisis, you would break the chain of those brave anticipatory measures which for the last fifteen years have been preparing to rescue the clergy from the trammels of mysticism, and bring them out into light and day. You cannot be certain that a man will be forthcoming ten years hence ready to take up your weary task. Were I to see you giving way now, you would remind me almost of a soldier deserting his flag."

"You may be right, my dear friend," replied Julio. "You see some dawning rays of the coming light. I have long been convinced of the reality of this daily communion through the press, this daily interchange of ideas from one end of the world to the other, through the means of a flying sheet like ours. It is, indeed, a comfort to me to have met with you at this moment of happy anticipation of things yet to be, in the midst of struggles, and wranglings, and bitter animosities in which so much invaluable energy is expended. But I

feel that my task is done. I have been like a midnight sentinel, watching for a few hours for the coming light. Those whom God has set over me decline my further service, and I recognize in their decision the voice of the Most High. Though my journal will cease, my book will remain; and I shall be able to take with me into my quiet solitude the consciousness that I have left behind me a reputation unstained by a single act of rebellion against constituted authority. The desperate spirit of absolutism has conquered in its struggle with me. So much the better: truth cannot be disseminated on the earth, except by the breaking of the potter's vessel in which the sacred perfume is contained. Their triumph, however, will redound to their disgrace; their unrighteous acts will be recorded in coming history to their eternal shame. Not a murmur shall pass my lips against my cruel persecutors; I am at their mercy, like a bale of goods tossed from one wharf to another; like a beast of burden, whose load may be changed, from time to time, but who is always under the yoke; like a slave, whose only variety of experience is to pass from one master to another. Such examples are necessary in the interest of the future race. We suffer for those yet to come. Liberty will return one day to the Church she has left; till then, I bow submissively, and, driven out from Paris, seek a shelter elsewhere. God will never leave me. His designs will yet receive their full accomplishment. Possibly, in some way, I shall be instrumental to the diffusion of truth, the knowledge of which is destined

hereafter to spread even in the most benighted spiritual deserts."

M. de Leich forebore to press the matter further. However, he undertook to write to one of the vicar-generals of T——, an old friend of his, on Julio's behalf, asking him to manage his quiet return from Paris to the Pyrenees.

PART VIII.

THE HOLOCAUST.

CHAPTER I.

EPISCOPAL DIPLOMACY.

M. De Leich wrote to the authorities at T——, to request the restoration of Julio to his old diocese. A week after he received a most gracious letter, intimating that monseigneur had appointed his protégé, curé of Melles, a parish in the mountains, near St. Béat. All that M. Julio had to do was to repair to T——; he would find the necessary authorization at the secretary's office, and might take possession of his new charge without delay.

Neither Julio nor M. de Leich had the faintest suspicion of what had passed between the archiepiscopal staffs at Paris and T—— during that week.

At the first request from the vicar-general, the friend of M. de Leich, to appoint Julio to a post in the diocese, the archbishop was all but in a violent rage.

"I, recall to my diocese that brainless fellow who has been the plague of my life already! Don't suppose it for a moment. No, a thousand times no. Just imagine how the case would stand. After having been driven

out of Paris, could he expect to find a protector in me? What would they say at Rome, where the Jesuits, who never know how to set bounds to their animosities, have blackened him a great deal more than he deserves, I admit, though he has many faults. He never would submit to his superiors, or consult them before acting; so much the worse for him now, if he has to take the consequences."

"I am not at all prepared to defend M. Julio to your highness. I don't sympathize with his opinions in the least; on the contrary, I think as you do, that he is an addle-pated fellow. He is one of those dreamers, whom I look upon as very dangerous, at a time when the priests, if left unrestrained, would implicate themselves in a host of irregularities, to the great injury of the Church. So I'm no protector of these independent gentlemen, whom the bishops invariably find it necessary to keep down in every possible way. But that is not the question at issue. He makes this application, solely as belonging to the diocese of T——. He declares that he only quitted it on the understanding conveyed by your highness in a solemn promise, that he would be welcomed back whenever he might feel disposed to return."

"Oh, yes, of course," said the archbishop. "I said that at the moment, in order to get rid of him more easily. Now, however, after the disturbance that his published opinions have created at Rome and in all the dioceses, frankly, I should be glad if he would go and hang himself. If he comes back here, we shall have

squabbles again, and squabbles I hate. I want to live at peace in my diocese."

"Your will is law, monseigneur. What answer shall I give to M. de Leich?"

"M. de Leich ought never to have made such a request."

"What is your highness's decision?"

"It's a most annoying case."

"I quite agree with you, monseigneur; but——"

"But—but! positively I don't know what to do."

"It seems to me, monseigneur, that you would be quite safe, if you had a letter from the archbishop of Paris, recommending his return."

"Ah, to be sure, that would be a wise precaution; we'll write, then."

And the archbishop dictated the following letter:—

"M. le Promoteur,—

"We have just had an application from M. l'Abbé Julio de la Clavière, formerly curé of St. Aventin, to be permitted to return to this diocese. As he has been residing at Paris for some time, we cannot possibly receive him here without a recommendation from your archbishop. Of course you are well acquainted with his antecedents, and the extent to which he has involved himself in ceaseless antagonism to ecclesiastical authority. He appeals to us as his ordinary, a relationship which we are sorrowfully compelled to acknowledge.

"Your answer will decide the course we shall take.

"Receive, &c.

"Signed ——"

This application threw the archiepiscopal council at Paris into great confusion. It was a serious business to refuse Julio his letters testimonial. To begin with, it was practically prohibiting him from resuming his ecclesiastical functions in his old diocese, and it was also giving him a pretext for remaining in Paris, even without a licence. On the other hand, to give it was to stultify the recent withdrawal of that licence. At the same time, the man must be got rid of at any price. The Jesuits after having everlastingly urged them to put him under episcopal censure, had, at length, succeeded. There, they felt, they must stop, and hence their desire to see the last of him.

So the promoter replied as follows:—

"MONSEIGNEUR,—

"WE have it in our power to furnish you with the recommendation you ask, in the case of M. l'Abbé Julio de la Clavière, a priest of your diocese, who has remained here some time. Nothing has come to our knowledge in the least degree discreditable to his moral character.

"Receive, &c.

"DE BARAMINOS, V.G.,

"*Promoter.*"

Julio, receiving this certificate of honourable conduct, like a servant paid and sent off, is a singular scene in this singular story.

"There," said the promoter, as he put his letter in an envelope, "that will do."

"It's short," said the archbishop, who presided; "but it's safe. After all, we have done the Abbé Julio a service in sending him from Paris. Perhaps, in some quiet mountain parish, where he will doubtless be placed, his indefatigable enemies will lose sight of him, if not entirely forget him."

"The Jesuits never forget," said one of the members of the council.

CHAPTER II.

PARIS, PARIS.

It cost the brother and sister acute suffering to leave Paris. Indeed, Louise was so thoroughly identified with Julio's particular tastes and favourite occupations, that she regretted deeply his abandonment of a task for which he seemed to be so thoroughly adapted. It required all the prospective charms of nature, in its mountain glory, combined with the strong attractive influence of the land of their birth, to reconcile them to the coming change.

"Paris! Paris!" they would often say to one another, in their new home. A simple exclamation enough, but significant by embodying their keen regrets.

Let it be added, for the information of those who are interested in the fortunes of our exiles, that Melles, where we now find them, is a lovely spot, like St. Aventin, in the grandeur of its scenery, but enjoying a milder temperature, inasmuch as its elevation is lower; nor is it so near the glaciers.

The presbytery was large and convenient. Louise had a lofty bedroom, with a southern aspect, and a small

adjoining dressing-room, not unlike her old haunt in the Rue Barouillière. Then there was a beautiful garden, full of every description of fruit-tree, trellises, beehives with a little straw roofing over them; the whole presenting an almost aristocratic residence. Moreover, the living of Melles, though it was not one of the livings of the canton, was considered, from its importance in point of population and revenue, one of the best of the mountain preferments. So Julio had fallen on his feet. We may add, too, that the remembrance of his gentle and blameless pastoral career at St. Aventin was sufficiently recent and vivid to have created a most favourable impression respecting him in the valley of St. Béat.

His residence in Paris had not, in the least, unhinged him for country life, with all its simple tastes; nor yet destroyed his tender sympathy for the poor, nor unfitted him for gentle ministrations at the bed of sickness. The St. Aventin people often asked after their old pastor; whom they always called the priest who had been the people's friend. A touching picture of true ministerial relationship, doubtless that which dwelt in Rousseau's mind, when he said that, in his judgment, the happiest earthly life was that of a village curé.

Julio at once betook himself to his new duties. He called on the curé of St. Béat and the neighbouring clergy; nor did he leave unvisited the humblest cottage in his parish, treating its tenant with that complete respect which told him that he, too, had his rank and weight in the great Christian family.

Amongst the papers which have assisted the compila-

tion of this story is a letter from Julio to M. de Leich, shortly after his arrival. We give it below :—

Melles, near St. Béat.

"Do you think I have forgotten you, dear M. de Leich? You to whom we owe the quiet peace of our solitary but pleasant home. What an unbounded joy it has been to see our beloved mountains again! They are always glorious, and always refreshing to us—poor victims of merciless oppression. The air here is so pure that our physical energies—which had been undermined (mine by close study, and Louise's by the incessant torrent of anonymous notes—which, since our arrival here, I find she used to receive almost every day—as well as by a host of other anxieties), are now reviving. I hope we shall soon pick up our strength, and that I shall recover health sufficient for ministerial work. Thank God for so mercifully sending us here! Thank you, dearest friend, for having been the instrument of His loving-kindness.

"While, however, we are out of the way of our persecutors, in a quiet solitude, we can't help feeling the pains of exile. We had surrounded ourselves with a new world. I was absorbed with my newspaper effort to unite the priesthood with modern society. That was a different ministry, unconfined by the limits of a parish, even of a town or province, but spreading its influence in every region where our common language is spoken.

"It cost me much to give up this glorious task.

But I thought it right and well for a priest to obey; and when I was told to seek ministerial employment elsewhere, I concluded that I was summoned by God from the field of discussion and controversy to another work.

"But this was not lightly realized, or my resolve easily taken. I find it hard to name the name of Paris without visible emotion. I thought I was a fixture there; one amongst the many upright, though often differing, thinkers who compose the great school of intellectual activity and progress at work in its midst. These all, in their invariable search after truth, I rejoiced to greet as brothers; while, on the other hand, I received a cordial welcome—not the less cordial because I abstained from rendering controversy bitter and abusive.

"There were some who resented this, and called me an apostate, because I had protested against their rancorous animosities, and love of cursing and burning. I desired to see free worshippers of the Most High. Their fondness was for a faith enforced by police regulations. I longed to see the Church exalted by the exhibition of tenderness and love. They would fain have her terrible in her relentless pursuit of the unbeliever to the edge of a miserable grave. My desire was to educate the Christian into gradual and successive developments in the Christian faith; theirs appeared to be to concentrate his gaze on mediæval darkness, and to train up to a firm embrace of an unaltered and unalterable system of superstition.

"No wonder they hated me; and being the strong against the weak, compelled me to submit. It was a case of inequality of forces; I was the one to go to the wall—truth and all.

"And now it is over. *Consummatum est.* You will treasure up the memory of the martyr's dying cry; you will bear witness to my agony while the sacrifice was going on.

"Ah! Paris!—Paris!—beautiful Paris!—the new Rome of the West, the empress of the world; subduing not by dint of soldiers' steel, but by the mightier weapon of human thought! Fair home of intellect, I bid thee grateful adieu, through this letter which none but a friend will read, grateful for that thou didst receive me in my weakness and obscurity, as though I had been the most powerful and illustrious of thy sons. I shall ever cherish for thee a filial reverence. In the ebbings and flowings of time and circumstance, —in days when the tumult of the moment is bearing away on its bosom men and things, and substituting new orders in rapid succession,—in such vehement heaving, as of the huge billows of the ocean, individual names are soon forgotten. Yet I ask of thee one boon, the only one I would seek to pilfer from those who have worked as earnestly in the cause of truth as I have,—let me cheer myself in my latest hours with the thought that of those who have grasped my hand, among your sons and daughters, there may be a few who will recall me as a humble pioneer in the march of liberty.

"And you, my dear friend, do not forsake or forget the exile. It will be some comfort to read the simple word Paris at the top of a letter. You will help me to remember the city I love so well.

"Good-by.

"JULIO."

CHAPTER III.

JULIO'S BOOK ON THE TEMPORAL POWER.

It was useless for Julio to seek retirement; his genius was not to be suppressed. While in his capacity of humble village curé, he had identified himself with the condition and feelings of the simple rustic; as the far-seeing prophet of the future, he was anticipating, with restless anxiety, the grave issues of the coming time. It could not but strike him that a strange spirit of infatuation had come over the minds of those high in authority in the Church, and obscured their view of the true interests of Catholicism, causing them to enter on a path of utter delusion, destined to issue, before long, in the entire episcopacy accepting as a dogma the theory of the temporal sovereignty.

Julio felt a warm admiration for the character of Pius IX. During his brief stay with Father Villeta, he had heard several touching and interesting stories of the private life of the gentle and blameless Pontiff. He knew how rare had been the instances of men of such spotless individual reputation occupying that exalted seat. He knew, too, how earnest and single-minded

had been his endeavours to effect reforms at the commencement of his reign, and he did not blame the man whose drawback was due rather to want of courage than want of heart. He remembered his remarkable announcement in full consistory, that he would not raise the question of his temporal sovereignty to the level of a dogma,—an announcement which, as it carried with it all the force of a final decision, suppressed, for a time, the raging excitement. Only for a time, however: the agitation soon returned, and the ruling of the Pope was got rid of by the ingenious subtlety, that if the doctrine of the temporal power was not a dogma, it was a truth for all that, which it was heresy to deny: miserable evasions, which the honest spirit of Julio indignantly repudiated. Blushing for Catholicism, and for the Church that had produced men like St. Bernard, St. Francis de Sales, Bossuet, and Fénélon; grieving over the degradation to which she had been reduced by the follies of ultramontanism; he thought he should like to take up the question on paper, with a view to bringing it out as it presented itself to his private thoughts.

Tracing the subject from the origin of Christianity, he proved, incontestably, that the theory of an earthly royalty had no place in the writings of our Lord and His apostles. This point he corroborated by quoting ecclesiastical writers from the earliest ages to the Council of Nice, challenging any to show that this doctrine could, either directly or indirectly, be inferred from their pages, and asking how it had happened that a

view ignored by the founders of the Church, and unknown in the Church in the day of her prime, could ever have been foisted into the Christian faith.

Thence he went on to show that the appropriation of Rome and the States of the Church was designed originally, not for the foundation of a sovereignty, but as a source of ecclesiastical revenue for a numerous priesthood; though, by a most illogical evasion, the structure of that anomalous power had been erected upon it; remarking, that so little had Charlemagne set up the Pope as King of Rome, that his successor, Louis le Débonnaire, rated his Holiness soundly for executing a man in the Eternal City without his permission.

Selecting an entire chapter of a book of Fenelon's, entitled *The Authority of the Sovereign Pontiff*,—unfortunately very little known and read,—he proceeded to trace the history of the Papal sovereignty, showing how those whose ambition had been to wear a crown like other kings, and sway as veritable a sceptre, were men of most questionable private character; while the best of the Popes had been invariably found among the number of those who paid allegiance to king or emperor, reigning themselves as spiritual sovereigns.

It will easily be understood that a disposition so refined and benevolent as Julio's, would effectually guard his work against any violence of language; only he expounded the oath taken by the Sovereign Pontiffs to suffer no interference with their dominions as connected with a custom which had obtained amongst

many of them, of alienating a large portion of the Papal territory for the purpose of converting it into petty principalities, under the government, and for the maintenance of young persons very nearly related to them.

He upset the great objection, that the temporal power was indispensable for the due exercise of the spiritual, alleged by the ultramontanes, as evident from the fact that the severe condemnation of the Jesuits had been brought about by external pressure.

He argued that this historical incident proved that the temporal sovereignty was not strong enough to support and protect the spiritual, even against the simple outside pressure of a diplomatic note. Hence it was credited with a power it did not really possess; the independence of the Church being derived from its divine origin, and not from such material props as the fancied rights of the tiara might supply.

Finally, approaching the question of the actual position of the Pontificate in the presence of the yearnings of the nation after a united Italy, he showed the greatness of the loss to Catholicism from its obstinate refusal to make common cause with the national party,—a terrible mistake, attended by most deplorable results, especially in a religious point of view.

"If in the short space of fifty years," he added, in conclusion, "Italy were overrun with infidelity, I could only attribute this melancholy state of things to the distressing misrule of Pius IX. and the Roman Court, and their grievous error in attempting to repress that

sentiment of exalted patriotism which reigns throughout the entire peninsula. God grant, in mercy, that in the issues I predict I may prove a false prophet!"

M. de Leich superintended the editing of his book in Paris, and communicated to him the lively dissatisfaction which its appearance had caused to the Ultramontane party. Its calmness of tone and respectful attitude towards constituted authority did but add weight to its arguments and increase its influence.

The tumult and rage against him knew no bounds; cries of malice, hatred, and scorn resounded on every side; denunciations the most inveterate and implacable flashed along the electric wires from one end of France to the other.

Bishops received letters from every direction; laymen in the Gallic Church assembled in council; their president issued manifestoes, full of rather heavy verbiage, but pointed enough to convey the essence of his views to such prelates as he hoped to win over. The Ultramontane bishops laboured at persuading their more sensible brethren to join in an official condemnation of Julio's book. Anxious to avoid giving material for further fights, though equally resolved against ceding their power in the presence of a rising lay faction, they gave way to pressure from all sides; some of them admitting that the proscribed author had been imprudent, while others were bold enough to credit him with the best intentions. Thus the most furious animosities were revived again, and a scheme of fresh persecution projected and matured.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THUNDERCLAP.

THE feelings of keen regret which our hero and heroine experienced on leaving Paris did not soon depart. Weeks after they had been settled at Melles, Julio's sorrowful yearnings after his old home remained as active as ever. When they were at St. Aventin, the attachment of Louise to Verdelon had crept up as a cold shadow between brother and sister; she was first in the world to Julio, he only second to her. Love is so utterly intolerant of a rival near the throne—so unbounded in its demands on the whole thoughts and faculties of the soul—that Louise's presence in the presbytery at that time was scarcely less a pain than a pleasure to her disappointed brother. Now, however, cured of that unhappy attachment, she lived only for him, devoted to his tastes and studies; each was the other's self; each shared the other's thoughts. She, conscious that it was now her turn to atone for the regrets she had previously caused him, put forth her most winning arts to cheer his despondency. The pure mountain air had wonderfully revived her; her cheeks,

that had so long been pale and emaciated, were now glowing with the roses of health. She was, in fact, more beautiful than ever. All her cheerfulness had come back. She was younger than she had been in her whole life, and the joyous change delighted her. She knew her presence there made sunshine round her brother; so she went and came, chanting the simple national melodies that Julio loved, and which pleasant voices had sung long days ago by the cradle of their infancy. One would have supposed, in short, that they had both returned to childhood's days, and were commencing life all over again.

Julio soon forgot his sufferings. So that Louise was there, all was there; so that on returning from his parish work he found her waiting for him, with her radiant smile, he had all he asked. Each day as it arose dispersed his rising anxieties with reference to her health; each day strengthened the happy confidence that the treasure of his life would yet be spared to him.

Thus passed nearly two months in purest and happiest enjoyment. Louise assured her brother that she was gaining strength daily in the joyous spring weather, and her appearance confirmed her words. Yet a strange cloud had gathered over their heads. And if the reader will look into Julio's room, where he is sitting with his papers round him, or if he will follow Louise, who has just run up to tap at the door, and received for answer, "I will come down directly, dear," he, more fortunate than the young lady herself should he get a peep in-

side, would see the poor fellow at his table, with his head upon his hands, while large scalding tears are channelling their way down his cheeks; another moment, and he is on his knees, calling on God, and this is his piteous cry:—

"Oh, God, my God, behold my anguish. Wherefore hast Thou given me this bitter cup? Is it not a dream—a terrible dream? How can I tell Louise? Tell her! I cannot—I will not; let me leave her in happy ignorance. I am the minister of the Crucified One; it is well that I, too, should bear my cross."

And then a quiet prayer, and then a holy calm, and then a cheerful smile, as, composed and refreshed, he seeks his sister.

"I am obliged to go to Argut to-day, dear. Perhaps I shall not return till late; so you mustn't wait for me."

"My dear Julio, you must let me come and meet you. You know that's one of my greatest treats. Besides, you'll be bringing me back a collection of mountain flowers, and I shall want to see it as soon as I can."

"I'll bring the nosegay, dearest; but I shall not be home till long after sunset. Remember how chill the evening air is, and think of your chest."

"Nonsense, you dear old boy. Nothing hurts me now."

"You are mistaken, Louise; you had a long coughing fit this morning. Please do as I ask you, dear."

"Well, I suppose I must, you darling tyrant, as

you're so anxious about my health. All the same, it's in capital condition. Julio, dearest, do you know I often think how good God has been to us in making me strong again. Our beloved Paris, where we lived so happily in the joy of our golden dreams, was a treacherous friend to me, I fear. You can't imagine what I suffered there. But here I feel all my physical force reviving. Our enemies have taken our worldly wealth, Julio, but we have been spared to each other," and passing her arm round him, she rested her beautiful head on his shoulder.

At first he almost repulsed her, but so sudden was the movement that she scarcely noticed it; then, pressing his lips to her forehead, he left the house. She watched him, as he passed away in the distance, wondering at his strange unrest, and paining herself with curious questions as to what it was that he had so evidently concealed from her, till a sudden fit of coughing arrested her musings; she put her handkerchief to her mouth, and, on removing it, found it steeped in blood.

"Ah," she said, "this is the first return of this dangerous symptom for many weeks. Merciful God, shouldst Thou be pleased to take my life, who would be left to comfort Julio?"

And her tears flowed abundantly.

As for Julio, he spent the whole day in the mountains, returning at night composed and calm. Louise, in spite of her anxious scrutiny, failed to detect any trace of the anguish he had gone through; while he,

for his part, was utterly ignorant of the fatal symptom that had occurred in his absence. Thus they suffered alone. Their spirits were estranged by a mutual secresy. Happiness had left the presbytery.

Julio wrote the whole night, by way of relief; and what he wrote revealed the secret of his incurable distress.

"To tranquillize my spirits, I have wearied out my bodily frame; but even if I have succeeded sufficiently to return home with enough cheerfulness to conceal from Louise the fact that I am almost broken-hearted, I have not attained sufficient mastery over myself to be able to arrange my thoughts in clear consecutive order.

"Perhaps I shall be more successful if I set to work to write them down.

"This morning I rose with a spirit overflowing with joy. I threw open my window, and, as the fresh mountain breeze, flower-laden, fanned my cheek, I felt an indescribable sensation of gratitude, and longed to glorify His name Who has done so much for me. It was one of those moments when the heart is full to bursting of love, life, and hope. No sorrowful thought could have found a resting place within me. True, my musings turned upon my enemies; but I could only pity them, and thank God, who had kept me free from all feelings of hatred.

"In this serene and happy spirit I went to my little church; Louise had furnished the altar with freshest and most fragrant flowers, among which the early summer gale was wandering, while the golden sun-

shine glorified the many-coloured leaves. I commenced the solemn service with greater joy than I have ever known since I became a priest—even in those earlier days of ministry when faith and love are in all the vigour of their youth.

"On returning to the presbytery, however, I heard Louise's dry, hacking cough. I felt an indescribable pang as I listened to the terrible sound, and my sweet morning happiness vanished like a dream.

"The attack lasted indeed only for a very short time. Louise herself proposed a long walk in the mountain; but I refused, fearing to fatigue her, and said I wanted to devote the morning to arranging our family papers. I even joked as I told her that I meant to draw up the La Clavière 'tree,' and that for this purpose I should have to disturb the dust of those precious parchments which our ancestors had been so good as to leave to us. Louise laughed at the aristocratic turn affairs had taken, exclaiming, as I left her in the drawing-room arranging her mountain flowers, that, in her judgment, those blossoms were worth all the flowers of heraldry, or the leaves and ornaments of royal and ducal crowns.

"I went upstairs, and, having shut myself in my own room, opened the identical box which Tournichon had given us, and which was inscribed 'family papers.' While I was hunting through its contents, I found a little case at the bottom—locked. Having hunted through the chest for the key without success, I was on the point of calling Louise, when—why, I know not—I retraced my steps. The contents of that case

were unknown; and there is always something mysterious in that thought. So much so that I felt my hand tremble as I examined the lock, to see how I could open it without doing any damage.

"The lock had been very carefully made. However, I managed to effect my purpose, by slipping back the bolt; and the first object that met my eye in the inside was a picture of my father's second wife—Louise's mother. It was very like Louise; indeed, it might almost have been taken for her. I kissed it, under the influence of the double sentiment of brotherly love and respect for the memory of the dead.

"There she was, thoughtful and sorrowful as ever. How often I used to romp in her room, round Louise's cradle, while she, wiping away furtive tears, would say to herself, 'Dear boy; one day he will protect my child.' I remember my father's passionate love for the new infant. Perhaps I should have been a little jealous had I not been as devoted to her myself, even in those early days.

"Then came a change. Madame de la Clavière died, when Louise was seven years old. My father became morose, reserved, and restless, and seemed as though he could scarcely bear to see his once darling child. However, we attributed the sudden caprice to his sorrow for the dead, as well as to a painful disease which was laying violent hold upon him. By a strange fancy, meanwhile, his affection for me seemed to increase every day.

"He died, leaving his orphan children to the care of

their aunt. Some time before this, he had sustained successive losses to a considerable extent. However, this was set down as the result of incapacity for business, proceeding from his morbid condition. He had placed all his available cash in a Paris bank. A few months after this he set out for Paris, and on his return announced that he was a ruined man—that his banker had absconded, with all his money.

"The sight of Madame de la Clavière's portrait recalled all these painful memories of the past. I continued to examine the case and found some pages, written in my father's hand—fatal pages, which, doubtless, his sudden death had prevented him from destroying. They contained the secret which he meant to have buried with him in the tomb, but which, by this fearful accident of my discovering them, had risen up to ruin the entire happiness of my life.

"For these fragments were addressed to no one. They were written like the pages I am writing now, in a solitary season of deepest and most unutterable emotion, when the heart feels as though it must relieve itself of its oppressive load. They contained agonizing reflections, bitter regrets of golden dreams dispelled for ever. There were some half effaced words upon them —words half effaced by tears, and mine flowed down to the spot where the all but worn-out stain was visible.

"This woman, whom my father so passionately loved, whom he had surrounded with every earthly blessing she had ever known, had never been thoroughly his;

and Louise was not his child, though born years after his marriage with her mother. She was delicate in the extreme as an infant; and my father, full of an unutterable dread of losing her, centred on her his warmest love.

"After her birth, her mother's health declined visibly. Her melancholy increased every day. She seemed to be sinking under some heavy sorrow.

"In her last hour, she confessed the whole, imploring my father's promise not to spurn her child from his feet. He yielded, but the happiness of his life was gone for ever. And then I learnt from that terrible paper that Louise was not my sister."

CHAPTER V.

THE PRIEST AND MAN.

"NOTHING that I have ever suffered at all comes up to my present anguish. When Louise disappeared from St. Aventin, terrible as my distress was, I kept up under the influence of the hope of recovering her. When the doors of the Inquisition cell closed upon me, I bade an eternal adieu—oh, so bitter!—to the outside world; but I raised my voice to the orphan's Father and sought His help. I looked upon the death, which I thought to be at hand, not as a terrible shade, but as an angel of deliverance, and was at rest, as I thought of a better and a brighter land. Then I could analyse my feelings day by day with the nicest exactitude, tracing every pain and its source, and measuring its acuteness; but now I know not how or what I am suffering.

"Sometimes, I think my mind is giving way; but no, that is not the case. I am only wretched—utterly wretched. Louise is not my sister—ample explanation of all. Those fatal words in that manuscript of my father's have carved themselves into my soul. A thousand strange convictions have risen up within me. It

seems as though all the love I had borne her since her birth had vanished. Then, in its place, comes another love, intoxicating my soul with delight. I am almost overcome with ecstasy at the thought that she is not my sister, that she may be my wife, when back comes the cruel fact, dashing the cup from my lips—wretched priest, you may not marry.

"But why seek to embody delirious thoughts? Nothing is altered in our way of living. But my heart is changed; what once was brotherly attachment is now a lover's passion. All her thousand endearing ways deepen the infatuation, till, at length, when she wiped my forehead with her handkerchief, as I came in exhausted from mountain visits, I almost thrust her from me. Indeed, so evident was the movement on my part that she seemed deeply hurt.

"No. She isn't my sister, nor can I disguise from myself that a terrible crisis has occurred in the history of my life. She has shown me myself.

"How little I thought what a sacrifice I was making, when I gave myself up to the priesthood! How little I understood the iniquity of the celibate vow! Afterwards, when, as the cardinal's secretary, the whole correspondence of the diocese came before me, I saw and heard what convinced me that to bind himself to a solitary life was a sin in man. Yet I saw many in the priesthood whose lives I knew to be blameless, and I felt that ideal perfection was within my reach. Subsequent experience, indeed, convinced me more and more how hard it was to realize that ideal; though I

did not repent that I had by my free choice proposed it to myself as the object of my life.

"The safeguard I leant upon was twofold—my devotion to scientific pursuits and my love for my sister. I thought that the intellectual life could easily overcome the natural—while Louise was at my side to absorb the affection of my heart. This love was my rock. I leant upon it and rejoiced in my security. But the rock is sinking, and I am struggling with the breakers."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRIEST AND MAN—(*continued*).

"ANOTHER week—and still I am as far as ever from tranquillizing my spirit. I have exerted myself to the utmost to hide my agitation from Louise, but with poor success. How strange I must appear to her! how utterly at a loss she must be to account for my singular manner! Once I could not bear her a moment out of my sight; now I am for ever inventing pretexts for leaving her in the presbytery alone, while I pass the day in roving up and down among the mountains. I return home to a silent dinner, and, the hurried meal over, shut myself up in my room to correct the second edition of my book on the Temporal Power.

"This is most glorious weather: earth and air are full of light, and life, and sound, and fragrance. Yesterday I found a bird's nest. My step had been so light that the mother had not heard it, and, as I moved away a branch very gently, I saw her with her wings spread out over her young, stretching forward her pretty-feathered head, and calling on her mate to bring some food. Soon I saw him hop on to a twig hard by, with

a whole provision store in his beak, while the happy mother shook her wings and uttered a sweet sound of joy.

"And thus Thou teachest me, O my God! through all creation, the holy happiness of family love, while at the same time there are those who assume to be wiser than Thyself, and to declare that the priest, set apart for Thy service, should be expelled from participating in it.

"And yet I have loved this priestly life. I thought I was made for it. I knew there were reforms needed in the Church. I felt that enforced celibacy ought to be abolished, inasmuch as many young priests bind themselves by its obligations without calculating the step they are taking.

"Still, as I said to Loubère in our last conversation, if I were called upon to-morrow to choose for or against the ministry, I would at once and for ever assume its holy functions. The priest is the one man appointed to teach what is right. The magistrate—the priest of civil life — waits for the commission of crime and avenges it. We anticipate and prevent it by showing a more excellent way. So our office is illustrious indeed. The magistrates say, 'You have sinned, and we punish you in the name of the law.' The priest says, 'You have sinned; go and sin no more; I forgive you in the name of God.'

"Yes, it is a glorious work. To say to the brethren, love one another, for that is the law of Christ; to the guilty,—though society repudiate you, I cannot, I dare

not. The Good Shepherd is ready to carry the lamb in His arms. From highest heaven the Father looks down, and stretches out His hands to the returning prodigal.

"Oh, why are such holy ministerial joys embittered by such aching thoughts!

* * * *

"Louise is beginning to show signs of anxiety as to my altered manner. That thorough familiarity of affection once so refreshing to us both, is become to me now a terrible trial.

"This last fortnight I have passed through the severest sufferings that it is possible to experience. What wild projects have I not conceived! what wild resolves have I not taken! Now, resolving to fly from her, and bury myself and my soul-consuming attachment in a monastery; again, reaching the conviction that rash vows to man are not binding before God, and purposing, accordingly, to carry off my beloved Louise, no longer my sister, into some far off land, where I might make her my wife. Twenty love-letters to that effect have I written and destroyed.

"And then, a struggle as to whether or not she should know the whole—ending with the conviction that it would be more manly and more brave in me to suffer alone. Possibly, were she told the truth, she would cease to love me. How I envy her her present peaceful affections! Why should I not drive out of my mind the memory of that fatal discovery, and assert to

my own heart, in dogged opposition to all this fever of disquietude—she is but your sister after all.

* * * *

"To pacify my spirit, I have doubled and trebled my work. Instead of avoiding Louise's presence, I have secured her aid in my researches after materials for a new work on the philosophy of Christianity. I cannot do without her. I want her constantly to help me, as she used to do at Paris. Her intelligence is a wonderful assistance; besides, she has a remarkable facility for the kind of employment I give her.

"I have attributed my oddity of manner to physical sufferings, which I wished to conceal from her. We have resumed our old walks and talks. A common observer would say that no change had passed over us at all; but I feel it—and so does she; and there ever seems to be creeping up between us a hideous phantom, pushing her away and grinning at my anguish. Oh, for the peace and the healthfulness of our brotherly and sisterly love! oh, for the repose they have carried away in their everlasting flight!

* * * *

"Yesterday, I was horribly selfish. I alluded to Verdelon—a name we had silently resolved never to mention in each other's presence. Louise turned red and white alternately: evidently she still loves him; and how should it be otherwise? Even when disappointed affection is in a measure healed, the wound leaves scars behind.

"I went out to visit a sick person; and, on my return, found her with her eyes very red. She had been weeping in my absence. Could any condition be more wretched than mine? As a brother, I might have inquired into her anguish, and sought to console her; but now such unrestricted sympathy of sorrow and joy was forbidden for ever. I was her brother no longer."

CHAPTER VII.

THE COUNCIL OF LIMOUX.

April 1862 was drawing to a close when the Provincial Council of Gascony was appointed to be held at Limoux. Julio, as belonging to the T—— diocese, was within the jurisdiction of this assembly. A long and violent letter, elaborated by a cabal connected with the *Catholic Atlas*, under the presidency of a former editor, was addressed to the Bishop of —— a prelate of well-known ultramontane tendencies, and a personal enemy of Julio's. At last it seemed probable that the Archbishop of T—— would lay aside his previous hesitation, and that the opponent of the theories of Rome would be condemned to perpetual silence.

The council was opened on the morning of the 5th of May, by a miscellaneous procession from the cathedral, which made a general circuit through the principal streets of the town. After the cross and banner, came the brothers of the Church schools, seminarists of the upper and lower seminary, missionary priests, monks of the various orders in the province, town curés, canons of the cathedrals, theological students of

Pamiers, Carcassone, and other places, the suffragan bishops of the province, with crosses, and mitres, and gold copes, the whole winding up with the most reverend president.

The Archbishop of T—— delivered the preliminary address in the presence of the rank and fashion of Limoux and the small surrounding towns. There were reserved seats for the authorities, while on an elevated daïs, consecrated to their use, the ladies spread out their ample robes of many-coloured silks, expanded with enormous crinolines. There was a stall for the Prefect of Aude, which would have been equally allotted to his service, had he been a Protestant or a Jew. A similar attention was paid to the general commanding: the president of the Assize Court was treated with equal courtesy; (though, for anything the heads of the council knew, the military personage might have been an infidel; the judicial, a disciple of Proudhon or Rénan, or brother of Vanhergen;) in an assembly, according to the decree of which, whoever did not believe in the Immaculate Conception was a heretic of the first magnitude.

Who, then, it might be asked, comprised the earnest Catholics in that assembly?

Of course there were the clergy, and probably the various church servants, such as beadles, sacristans, organists, choristers, &c. &c. Then there were the vestrymen, a few old men, a few old women, and moreover young ones, and these were all.

The rest of the gathering consisted of ladies and

gentlemen of fashion, inquisitive, indifferent, unbelieving, sceptical, yet perfectly well-behaved, and going through the various ceremonial requirements with admirable patience.

The burdensome eloquence of the president expended itself in a long and wearisome address, the one blissful topic of which was the renewal of the face of the earth by the Council of Limoux. Nothing was omitted from this wonderful effusion; certainly not the immortal Pius IX. and his still more immortal Pontificate, nor the proclamation of the Immaculate Conception, nor yet the anguish of the heavily afflicted Pontiff. Room was also found for a fair amount of anathemas against the Revolution, which in the elegant phraseology of the allocution, had been vomited out of the mouth of hell, while a corner was kept clear for the accommodation of the coming triumphs of the regal Papacy, under the rule of Mary the Immaculate, the sole executioner of heretics of every grade, without a single exception, throughout the world.

The next day the business of the council was arranged at a special sitting. The promoter administered to the canons, theologians, and canonists present, the oath of secresy with reference to anything the bishops might say; also of secresy on whatever matter might weaken the respect due to the council or to those who composed it.

Then the presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, and theologians of the different congregations were named in succession. The sittings for reading the decrees

were next agreed upon, as well as the general assemblies at which the discussions were to take place.

These preliminaries once over, the labours of the council commenced, and were diligently prosecuted. The sixth general council under the presidency of the Archbishop of T——, took place on the 10th, at four P. M., in the presence of the suffragan bishops, the deputations from the various chapters, and the theological students. The most reverend president having repeated the prayer, *Adsumus* — one of the secretaries present read the minutes of the last meeting. Two decrees were next approved, one proscribing liberal journals in general, and the *Cycle, Coq National,* and *Feuille,* in particular, as convicted of unsoundness on the famous "power" question, and of too great a fancy for the Italian Revolution; the other prohibiting whirling dances, such as polkas, mazurkas, &c. &c. as being inexpedient and objectionable.

These two edicts had been most carefully prepared by the committee "de bonis moribus," the old men composing it being decidedly of opinion that all the miseries of the nineteenth century were due to the waltz, or rather to the devil who invented it.

Then the right reverend president of the committee on matters of doctrine prayed speech with the most reverend president of the council, and held forth as follows:—

"Most illustrious and most reverend father, and very dear brethren,—

"I cordially concur in these two decrees directed

against certain vices in the church and designed to exterminate them. In issuing them you have manifested a profound acquaintance with the evils of modern society; evils which expose the real character of its pretended civilization. But I make bold to say there is a greater scandal than these, a scandal that comes nearer home to ourselves, a scandal which forbearance —I might almost call it culpable—at all events very much to be regretted forbearance is at this moment tolerating in our midst; need I say that I speak of heresy." (Profound sensation.)

"A new Arnaud de Bresse is ravaging the south like a beast of prey, and seeking to destroy human souls by his pestilential teaching." (Several voices: "Damnation to the heretic!') "This destroyer of the faith, this enemy of the Church and the throne of St. Peter, against which for several years past, he has been hurling perpetual blasphemies, is a priest in the diocese of T——, and bears the hated name, Julio de la Clavière. Like all heretics that ever have been or ever will be, he assumes the appearance of an angel of light. The modesty of his demeanour is undeniable, as much so the gentleness of his language, and his affected devotedness to the true interests of the Church. By this fair but false assumption of probity, generosity, pious fervour, and attachment to the Papacy, and the Pope individually, for whom indeed, he declares he has a peculiarly warm regard,—by this outside show of Catholic spirit he has ensnared pious souls, deceived the weak, and seduced the ignorant to their exceeding peril."

(General cries of "Damnation to the heretic, damnation again and again." "He ought to be summarily dealt with by the council.")

"But the deadliest injuries he has wrought in the Church have resulted from his writings. Some time since he was guilty of positive forgery, by putting forth a certain publication as proceeding from a late cardinal, while it was clearly the product of his own imagination, and teemed with blasphemies against the Church. It is notorious that this disgraceful pamphlet was most largely read at T——, that its author was praised by the sceptic and the infidel, and described as a writer of conspicuous merit." (A voice: "Let the council curse him.")

"Nor is this all. He has disgraced the pulpit by the publication of errors, to the great scandal of the faithful, and the openly-avowed delight of the enemies of the Church.

"In the States of the Church he went so far as to imitate the worst foes of religious communities by breaking into a convent, and carrying off an inmate from the cloister—a crime which the Holy Inquisition avenged, but with such laxity of vigilance over the prisoners that he found no difficulty in escaping from a punishment which, had he had any remnant within him of the faith he professed, he would have done well to have accepted in humble penitence. Since that time he has been a daily contributor to the newspapers, through which he has promulgated every conceivable heresy condemned by the autho-

rity of the most holy Pontiffs, Gregory XVI. and Pius IX.

"Finally, he has filled up the measure of his iniquities by issuing an elaborate work against the temporal power, ignoring the constitution of the Sovereign Pontiffs, in which it is set forth that the Pope has been entrusted with the two swords; that all power having been given to Christ, all power has, by consequence, been transferred to His representative on earth." (Numerous cries: "Curses on the heretic!")

"Yes, indeed, most reverend and most illustrious fathers and very dear brethren, cursed be the priest who has disgraced his holy office by devising a shameful calumny against an archbishop, a prince of the Church.

"Cursed be the priest who has preached falsehood in the pulpit of truth!

"Cursed be the priest who has broken into the sacred seclusion of the convent, protected by the authority of councils and the Papal constitution!

"Cursed be the priest who has corrupted the souls of the faithful by the pestilential tenets of modern journalism! Let him be accursed in company with Dathan and Abiram, with Uzziah who profaned the ark, with Judas the traitor, and with other heretics, whom the Church has anathematized in times past.

"Cursed be the priest who has attacked that temporal power of the Pope which alone can secure the due exercise of his spiritual functions!

"Cursed be the priest who dares to teach the Pope

and bench of bishops, and to pretend that he knows better than they what is best for the Church!

"Cursed be the insolent upstart! the heretic! the sacrilegious desecrator! the innovator! the journalist! the author of scandalous publications!

"Cursed be he, whosoever he may be, who shall approve of the doctrines of Julio de la Clavière! at this present, curé of Melles, in the diocese of T——."

And stepping into the middle of the room, and taking a copy of the Gospels in his hands, he added,—

"Our choice, this day, is between Christ and Julio who has put Him to shame. As for me, I separate from Julio. I anathematize him; I curse him to the uttermost, and cleave to Christ." (Shouts from all parts of the council chamber, "We cleave to Christ! Curses on Julio, the traitor! the apostate!")

This harangue, conceived in the exaggerated vehemence of mediæval phraseology, created an intense excitement among those who were present, and changed the grave and orderly gathering into an assembly of violent desperadoes.

Meanwhile the Archbishop of T—— threw a little cold water on the raging fire of indignation. He was not fond of the Bishop of ——, who bore the reputation of being the most enthusiastic ultramontanist in France. Moreover, a sentence in the recent discourse had been levelled at himself, to his very considerable displeasure. So he rose at once to reply to the wholesale cursing of the previous speaker:—

"Most illustrious and most reverend fathers and very dear brethren!

"Were we only invited to anathematize the imprudent and ill-considered teaching of M. l'Abbé Julio, I should be among the first to join the protest; nor, since the priest referred to belongs to my diocese, should I have left the task of denouncing him to one of my suffragans. But the question involved goes far more deeply than this. Deferring most reverently as we do to the holy chair of St. Peter, and to the most venerable institution of the Papacy, it would ill become us to arrogate to ourselves functions entrusted solely to the sacred congregation of the Index.

"In fact, we should expose ourselves to the imputation of presuming to set an example to the Papal court; while a condemnation issued by us assembled here would be an encroachment on rights—held, I am aware, at one time by the bishops collectively, but transferred by them to the safer keeping of the successors of St. Peter, in order that all possible power might be concentrated in the pontifical hands.

"However becoming may be your indignant protest against those doctrines, the evil of which has been so ably demonstrated by the right reverend president of the doctrinal committee, I cannot help thinking that we should manifest greater respect to Rome, were we to leave it to the congregation of the Index to proscribe the heresies; while, at the same time, the condemnation would be more generally known through the Catholic world. Moreover, our conduct would, undoubtedly,

on general grounds, be more prudent and wise. Rome is gentleness itself in her dealing with offences and offenders. She delights to leave it in the power of voluntary or almost involuntary transgressors to return of their own accord into the paths of truth. She is satisfied with a simple submission to her decrees, and avoids pushing to extremes those who, in many cases, have been unconsciously estranged from the faith.

"The Abbé Julio may be ranged amongst certain fanciful dreamers who, in their search after truth, have fallen into dangerous error. Meanwhile, his disposition is as amiable as his morals are unimpeachable; nor has he manifested the slightest obstinacy towards constituted authority. After the publication of the famous pamphlet, purporting to be an embodiment of the dying words of my illustrious predecessor, he gave me an assurance, in writing, of his complete submission to the ecclesiastical tribunals in that matter, and thus arrested the scandal which that silly book threatened to create. This document I would have submitted to your equitable and charitable judgment, had I imagined for a moment that a matter which I think of little importance—and I ought to be an authority on the subject, seeing that it concerns myself—could possibly have been brought into such prominence amongst you." (Loud cries of "Hear, hear!" from all parts of the room.)

"I see, most illustrious fathers and very dear brethren, that what I have already said, has placed this affair

in a sufficiently satisfactory light to make it unnecessary for me to dilate upon it any further. But there is one consideration which I am bound to urge upon you, at a time when insubordination is the order of the day; and that is, the importance of guarding against any proceedings calculated to drive impetuous natures to revolt against the Church.

"It would be well for us to remember the lessons of history, and diligently to apply them. There have been men who would have faithfully served the holy cause to which we ourselves are devoted, had they been judiciously dealt with; but who, by the severity of the measures meted out to them, have been estranged from our midst, and urged into violent opposition.

"I demand, therefore, that the proposed anathemas be withdrawn, and that we leave it to the sacred congregation of the Index, to deal with the Abbé Julio de la Clavière, as, in its judgment, it may deem fittest and best."

The tact of this address is very evident. The archbishop rescued Julio by referring his case to a higher tribunal. He set down the furious bishop, and read all present a salutary lesson on moderation, when an opposite spirit was exhibiting such injurious effects. At the same time he had in his mind his parting interview with Loubère—the remembrance of which remained with him day and night. Over and over again would he lie tossing on his bed under a horrible nightmare, shuddering at the terrible abbé, who would appear to

him in his morbid dreams, dressed in a blouse, holding a pistol to his head, and hissing out the stern, calm words, "Touch Julio, and you are a dead man."

The suggestions of the archbishop were accepted by the majority present, and inserted in the minutes. Whereupon the business of the sitting terminated, and the president concluded with the customary prayer.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DARK CLOUD.

"At length, my rebellious heart is quieted; but a how terrible a cost! In the depths of my anguish an struggle against an evil which a moment's quiet reflectio might have enabled me more correctly to estimate, little suspected the grave that was yawning at my fee and threatening to swallow up Louise and all m earthly happiness. How could I dare to murmur a my lot, and abandon myself to a gloomy madness an sinful rebellion against God, or presume to be unhapp as long as she was spared? My God, pardon and spar me. Thou canst prolong her life; Thou canst take he hand, as of old the hand of the daughter of Jairus wa taken, and bid her arise. But, do I deserve such favou at Thy hands? Father, forgive my sinfulness; lik Jesus in Gethsemane, I would say, 'If it be possible remove this cup from me.'

"Her terrible cough has returned. During the thre weeks that I was for ever absenting myself from home I did not notice its re-appearance. Yesterday, howeve

when we were sitting at our literary work, an attack of it came on. Her handkerchief, which she put to her mouth, was dyed with blood. As I looked at her, her large eyes shone with unnatural brilliancy, her cheeks were deadly pale, except where a hectic flush glowed in the centre. I seized her hand, and found it was burning with heat.

"'You are feverish,' I said.

"'Yes, for the first time in the day,' was her reply.

"'Then you have often been feverish at night?'

"'For the last fortnight, slightly.'

"'Oh, Louise,' I exclaimed, bitterly distressed, 'you have been ill all this time, and never told me!'

"'Didn't you notice it, dear?'

"'How could I, dearest?'

"'I saw you look wretched, Julio; your eyes were often fixed upon me in a strange, weird sort of way. When I have gone up to you, and tried to take your hand, and press it over my heart, to still its passionate beatings, you have tried to get away from me; and I fancied it was because you wanted to hide your tears. I have read my sentence in your agitated face, Julio. I know I am going to die. Am I not?'

"So saying, she threw herself into my arms, and we wept together.

"'No, dearest Louise,' I said, 'you shall not die. God will never separate the brother and sister.'

"But the excitement had been too much for her—she was obliged to go upstairs.

"I followed her, and knelt by her bed; taking her

hand in mine, and trying to calm her agitation. I assured her that my distress and altered manner had in no way arisen from her illness; that it was merely the result of a depression of spirits, very common amongst men who, in the fag of literary work, have failed to express their pent-up thoughts to their own satisfaction. My book on the temporal power, I reminded her, had been no easy task; and now that it was over, I was suffering from reaction. I had made vigorous efforts to overcome it, and hence my constant absence from home.

"'But why didn't you tell me all this?' she asked. 'Why did you suffer alone? If I had not understood you too well, do you know I should have thought, more than once, that your affection for me was diminishing?'

"'Oh, Louise, Louise! you never could have imagined that—it would, indeed, have been a cruel wrong.'

"She looked at me with an angel's smile.

"'No,' she said, slowly, 'I never doubted you; only you had got to be a very queer old boy, and I could not make you out.'"

* * * *

"I have had to call Dr. D. Alas! he gives me no hope. I knew that she was doomed; but to have my worst convictions confirmed authoritatively, is terrible. There is always a vestige of hope at the bottom of the soul till science comes—calm, cold, and

inexorable—and crushes it out. A month, perhaps, a fortnight, and I am to lose her—so the physician told me this morning; yet I remained quiet. I even summoned courage to go into her room with a smile upon my face, and a look of satisfaction. After all, he was bound to tell me the truth; and decided as he was with me, he was gentleness itself with her. 'In the state in which she is,' he said, 'it would be dangerous in the extreme to tell her her danger. She is suffering not only from disease of the chest and lungs, but her heart is affected as well; so that I cannot reckon on her case with any certainty, as sudden emotion might carry her off at a moment's notice. There is no doubt that her constitution is hopelessly injured, but her mind is suffering as well. Indeed, I should have succeeded in cheering her up if it had not been for that. But this other affection is so alarming and so unaccountable, and imparts such strange fancies and delusions to those whom it may seize, that it is most difficult to deal with them; indeed, as a rule, their nervous susceptibility is so acutely developed, that every impression is perilous. You must keep careful watch over your looks and manner. The least inadvertent yielding to your feelings might prove her instant death.'

"I listened, motionless with dismay. My blood froze in my veins; all I gathered was that, by doing violence to every emotion within me, I might prolong her life for a little time. I pressed the physician's hand, and promised obedience: hence my cheerful composure and sunny smile when I went into her room. Oh,

how my looks belied my feelings! However, I succeeded in deluding her; she smiled, in return, a quiet, happy smile. We laughed together at our fears. She knew that I had been as much alarmed as herself at the recent attack; 'but then,' she said, 'the doctor had so thoroughly explained it. She only wanted a few days' rest. April weather was very uncertain; but the merry month of May would be sure to bring her round again. And then! oh, then, Julio!' she added, 'what glorious walks for us! what delicious rambles and flower gatherings on the mountains, under rocks, down in the valleys, or by the cascades! for you shan't go out alone any more, sir, I can tell you. And what beautiful botanical collections we shall be able to make, to replace those we might have formed while you were wandering over the world, like a knight-errant, in search of your sister. Julio, dear, the month of May will do wonders for me.

"'Yes, darling, it will, indeed.'

"And a voice within whispered to me, 'Yes, you will be gathering flowers—beautiful flowers—in the month of May—to blossom on her grave!'

"And while it was whispering, I was smiling; and when it had ceased, I went smiling on.

* * * * * *

"She never left her room again. The disease made rapid progress; her palpitations were incessant. The Holy week and Easter services called me away from her continually. Lord Jesus, my agony has been added to Thine. I have followed Thee to Calvary, and

poured out my weepings there. The mournful wailings of the prophets, the veiled shrines, the extinguished tapers, the Church in her robes of sable,—I felt the sublime poetry of these touching solemnities as I never felt it before. But the Resurrection Day, with its reviving glories, brought me no joy. The songs of triumph and jubilant allelujahs were on my lips, but my heart gave forth only the voice of anguish, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.'

* * * * * *

"Louise wished to join the Easter communion, and she asked me with a look that watched curiously for my reply as well as for the expression that her request would call up on my face. I answered her with perfect naturalness of manner.

"'The Easter services can be extended in the case of invalids.'

"'No, no,' she said, 'I mustn't delay. As soon as I can go out, I shall go to the church to thank God for having visited me here.'

"Poor darling. She received the communion with simple, holy trust. My God, Thou knowest how I suffered!

* * * * * *

"*May* 1*st.*

"Before this month has expired, I shall be alone, so the doctor tells me, and I feel that he is right. How much of these thirty-one days am I to spend with her?

"I cannot understand the feelings that were aroused in me by the discovery that Louise was not my sister. Oh! if God were to preserve her life, how thankful I should be to cherish her once more with all a brother's guileless love. But this happiness has been taken from me. She is doomed to die.

* * * * * *

"To-day she is much better; the pulsations of her heart have calmed down. Why not hope that her life might be respited a little longer. I communicated my thoughts to the physician.

"'Would you know the truth?' he answered. 'You would? Well, it's a question not of weeks, but of days —should a sudden crisis come, which I much dread— even hours.'

"I had thought till now that we had succeeded in keeping her ignorant of her approaching death; she seemed so calm. Though she did not form any plans or arrangements, as consumptive patients generally do, she still spoke of the future as a certainty, never seeming to assume that her days were numbered. Well, I was mistaken. She had never been deceived for a moment. That morning I found her better than the evening before. She had had such an excellent night, with a few hours of quiet sleep. In spite of all that had been said to me, I could not help hoping she might yet live. She read my thoughts in my face.

"'You fancy I'm better, dear?'

"'Yes, darling; you're much better.'

"'I am free from pain for a time; and that's a

good deal to say; but there's no other change. Look the thing in the face, dear, and don't hope against hope. Stop, here's that pain at my heart, back again.'

"'Louise, dear dear Louise, what are you saying?'

"'I say,' she replied, in a hurried tone, and fixing her large eyes upon me, 'that we ought not to try and deceive ourselves during the little time that I shall be spared to remain with you. It is yours, dear brother, to teach me how to prepare for death. We've had enough of mutual dissimulation, a trial for both of us; let us attempt it no longer. Oh, Julio,' she added, bursting into tears, 'I am sorry to leave this happy life and the pleasant sunshine, the flowers, vallies and mountains, the glorious world blossoming around me, whose hidden beauties you have taught me to admire, but what is their loss compared with the loss of you? Who can tell what trials may yet be in store for you. That book of yours, so full of gospel teaching, and so tempered with all its truthfulness by reverential love for a poor, tottering old man, will cost you dear. And I shall no longer be at your side to soothe your sufferings by sharing them with you."

"Her voice grew husky. Her eyes shone more brilliantly than ever. The palpitations became very violent.

"'Do not cry, Julio,' she said, putting her arms round my neck. 'I have always thought that disembodied spirits return to those they love, and linger near them. So I shall come back to you, Julio; for you are the only one in the world that I care for. And, now, think of your office. It's high time.'

"I understood her only too well. . . . . She received from my trembling hands the last sacraments; and I summoned sufficient courage to utter the sublime invitation, to one so tenderly beloved,

'Sors de ce monde, âme Chrétienne!'

"The service over, she lay perfectly quiet for a time.

"'I am well—quite well,' she said, after a pause. 'Let me speak a little; it doesn't tire me. We are waiting death together, Julio: it will only separate us for a very short time. You have suffered, and will suffer, much yet; and this prolonged agony will do its deadly work. You will soon join me, dearest brother.'

"She had a fearful night. 'This pain,' she said, in a low voice, 'is very trying for both of us; but, at all events, we are not compelled to disguise our sufferings from each other.'

"*17th May.*

"'Listen to me,' she exclaimed, after two hours of very deep repose. 'I want to speak to you for a moment of him; you know whom I mean, though I never mention his name. He has done me grievous harm; but I forgive him. For a long time I have not been able to imagine how it was I ever loved him so much.'

"Her breathing became more oppressive. I raised her tenderly, and she rested her head on my bosom.

"'It is sweet,' she said, 'to die in your arms. How could I have desired another love than yours? In this last moment, I see plainly that you had my real heart; that other attachment was but an infatuation.'

"Was it so, that she had learnt the secret on the threshold of eternity?

"Had I asked her, she could not have come back to tell me; for I was imprinting my passionate kiss on the lips of the dead."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CARDINAL'S HAT.

THE precautions taken by the council to prevent any of its measures transpiring, proved futile. Oaths are easily taken, but not so easily kept. A deliberative assembly, though it only consist of two members, is in its very nature rash; it can't, somehow, help blabbing.

What occurred in connexion with Julio at the council of Limoux, created a great stir in the religious world. Some thought that the archbishop had acted very wisely; others, a bishop or two amongst them, opined differently.

Meanwhile, the preparations were complete for the great episcopal manifestation of 8th June, 1862.

Once before the ultramontanes had contrived to get the Catholic bishops to Rome, to be present at the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. The episcopate, ignoring its rights, signed its own downfall and proclaimed Papal omnipotence, in thus countenancing the promotion by the Pope of a controverted opinion to the level of an article of faith. Never had the worthy prelates been more skilfully

hoodwinked since the earliest days of their episcopacy, all unprepared as they were, in their simplicity, to recognize in the whole proceeding a trap for involving them in the establishment not so much of the privileges of the Virgin as of the infallibility of the Pope. The measure had been devised a long time by the Jesuits, and while the Pope was at Gaeta, worried out of his life by the recent casualties, those nearest his person availed themselves adroitly of the occasion to suggest the expediency, at a time when the temporal power was represented as tottering to the ground, of exalting the spiritual to the skies by the promulgation of an article of faith.

Pius IX., having compromised himself very seriously with the Austrians and other friends of the ultramontane party, by his attempts at liberal government, felt the necessity in which he was involved of giving some guarantee for his return to the old system of absolutism. Hence his eager concurrence in the measure proposed, and the issue from Gaeta of an invitation to the Catholic bishops to assist the Holy See with their counsels on the subject.

The bishops were amazed at the despatch, imagining that the Pope had been occupying his leisure by reviewing this old theological quarrel. On consulting their curés, they found them as ignorant as themselves of a question which had been shelved for ages past. The worthy priests, however, had more than once overheard old women repeat the accustomed formula, "Marie conçue sans péché, priez pour nous qui avons

recours à vous,"—so they gave it out as their judgment that the parish verdict was on the Virgin's side.

This was all Rome wanted. Not a single bishop or vicar had detected the Jesuit plot. Meanwhile, the fathers themselves were occupied with making most erudite researches. One of the most illustrious of their body — illustrious, afterwards, for his separation — Father Passaglia, proved, in two or three folio volumes, that the word "immaculate" occurred in all the French and Latin writers from the time of St. Jean Damascene. True, St. Paul had said that all were born in sin; St. Augustine testified to a similar effect; Popes, even, in the Church's palmiest days, denounced the dogma about to be pronounced. What of that? To contradict St. Paul, to give St. Augustine the lie, to stultify the earlier teaching of St. Peter's chair, nothing simpler, a mere bagatelle that to the Jesuit mind. Who reads St. Paul, St. Augustine, or Papal sermons now-a-days? It would take more than that to stop the sons of Loyola. The Pope, who hadn't time for books, agreed with them, the bishops agreed with the Pope, and the Catholic world was immediately commanded to agree with the bishops.

This view of matters once established, the Jesuit manœuvres prospered through the efforts of the *Univers*, beyond the highest expectations. Every bold priest, who, after careful consideration of the doctrine, showed any anxiety to think further about it before he believed it, was condemned at once to the most pitiless persecution.

Take the Abbé Laborde, for instance, a man of blame-

less reputation, who eventually died of starvation in Paris, a martyr to his honest convictions.

The ultramontanes had prearranged all their plans; and, as soon as the bishops were assembled, addressed them in a long oration, the substance of which was:—

"Venerable fathers in God, you are not come here to aid the deliberations of the Pope as brother bishops; you are present to act as his acolytes, and lend a finish to the display. The Pope will see about the doctrine; you have nothing to do with it."

The worthy fathers had provided themselves with mitres blazing with precious stones, grand carved silver-gilt crosses, and copes of cloth of gold. They would not have missed, on any account, showing off their finery under Michel-Angelo's cupola. They were assisting at the proclamation of an article of faith; so they ought to be well dressed.

The episcopals of the twentieth century will make a note of this.

What transpired on December 8, 1854, was not enough, by way of a surprise, to the Catholic world; so the ultramontane party determined on repeating the experiment in 1862. The papacy, more domineering than ever, resolved to show that, whatever might have been the results of the revolution to the temporal power, the spiritual was as lively as ever. The bishops were sent for once more, trooped in as obediently as before, brought the same beautiful wardrobes, graced a ceremony at which no less than forty thousand francs' worth of wax-candles were burnt; and,

without having pluck enough to meet in council, showed themselves as submissive as ever to the papacy, which they were then supremely exalting over their own heads, by signing a round-robin, in the shape of a political declaration, that the temporal rule was indispensable—little dreaming, in their short-sightedness, that a day is at hand when, in order to be logical, they will have to proclaim the opposite.

Not that Monseigneur le Cricq troubled himself with any such profound reflections. The life of an archbishop, he reflected, was very short. What mattered it to him whether his successors preserved their rank and dignity, or whether popes were, or were not, omnipotent. He must see about being cardinal at once—never mind what happened after.

He had played his cards well. The council of Limoux had created a considerable sensation in the official world; nor was it from a mere chance source that Government received their report of the archbishop's conduct on that occasion. Indeed, it was currently reported that the most reverend himself was their informant; nor did he fail to impress them with a suitable idea of his high spiritual tolerance, moderation, and good sense. His skilful resistance of the fanatical outbreak of the suffragan, on that occasion, secured his triumph. His friend, the general, made the most of his generous treatment of the persecuted priest. The desired consent was obtained—a despatch reached the happy man, to the effect that he was appointed cardinal.

This was much indeed, but it was not all; there was Rome to win over yet. North of the mountains, where the wind was genial, pleasant, and tolerant, monseigneur had to blow accordingly; south, where it set in from a totally opposite quarter, monseigneur had to set in from a totally opposite quarter too. Above all, he had to hate Gallicanism, that couldn't be done without—Gallicanism, the doctrine of Bossuet, Fleury, la Luzerne, Affre, and many others who have declined to believe in pontifical infallibility.

Now, Le Cricq troubled himself as much about Bossuet as he did about Bellarmin. All his care was to get hold of his hat. He was received most warmly at Rome. The French ambassador had applied for the new dignity in his behalf; and the request had been at once granted. At the commencement of his visit, he was here, there, and everywhere; calling in all directions, first, on the general of the Jesuits; secondly, on the Pope's domestic prelates; thirdly, on all the cardinals and bishops conspicuous at Rome for their hostility to France, and their inextinguishable ultramontanism.

Things were progressing as smoothly as a marriage bell, when, who should arrive at Rome but the discomfited suffragan of Limoux: not after a hat,—he had no idea of that,—but on a little project of his own—the extinction of Gallicanism and civilization generally.

This dignitary, as obstinate as any mule or monk, and as bloody-minded as the most bigoted inquisitor, had an audience of the Pope, and told him of the archbishop's doings at the council, and of the way in which

he had screened the enemy of the temporal power. He was fatally successful; there was a slip for Le Cricq between the cup and the lip.

That most reverend and most illustrious personage, who had been basking in papal sunshine, was not a little astonished, on his second visit to the Vatican, to find that an east wind had set in, with a total change in the weather. Domestic prelates, the cardinal minister, cardinals of the ultramontane section, became suddenly reserved and frigid.

"An enemy hath done this," was his agreeable soliloquy. "I must find out all about it."

His agent at Rome went to work most carefully to procure information. He had some little difficulty at first, but eventually he succeeded in bringing him the following news:—

"Your friend has been the Bishop of ——, who has kindly acquainted the Pope that you had absolutely defended, in full council, an enemy of the temporal power. The Pope made no reply, but was evidently much annoyed.

"The same evening, his Holiness observed to Monsignor B., one of his most intimate domestic prelates,

"'I was going to make a curious cardinal."

It was as much as the archbishop could do to sustain his sinking spirits under this terrible revelation.

"What must I do, my dear abbé?" he exclaimed.

"Do, monseigneur! let the storm pass over you. Sham to be dead; allow yourself to be forgotten for a few days; disappear, in fact."

"A capital idea." And the holy man, giving up his previous amusements, went to the Gèsu, to engage in the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius."

"One of the best dodges I ever heard of," muttered the abbé; "an Italian couldn't have done better."

The lucky retreat was a thorough success. It terminated on the 7th of June, the day before the great solemnity.

The next morning the general of the Jesuits called on the Pope to congratulate him on the various glorious events that had transpired; amongst other things, on the piety that had been manifested by the French bishops during their stay in Rome.

"We have been especially struck, holy Father," he said, "by his highness, Monseigneur Le Cricq, archbishop of T——, who, with great humility, solemnized a retreat at the Gèsu. Such devotion as he manifests for your Holiness and the Papal throne! He explained to me that his motive in interfering with a proposition which had arisen at the council of Limoux, to condemn the doctrine of the notorious Julio de la Clavière then and there, arose simply from a desire to reserve the right of judgment to the Congregation of the Index. At the same time, he so worthily maintained his point that the council abandoned their project; while he himself is at present denouncing the author and his writings to the cardinal prefect of the Index, and preparing an interdict against him."

A smile from the Pope assured the very reverend general that he had gained his point.

Two days afterwards the *Catholic Atlas* contained the following paragraph :—

"Our news from Rome is full of interest. The sovereign Pontiff continues to testify his high esteem for the French bishops; indeed, a telegraphic despatch just received, conveys the intelligence that Monseigneur Le Cricq, archbishop of T——, has just been named a cardinal. The Pope is desirous of rewarding in his person the unbounded attachment to the Holy See manifested by the Gallican episcopacy. Gallicanism, itself, is extinguished utterly, and Roman supremacy shines out as a realized fact. There is but one chief shepherd, with faithful servants round him, illustrating the glorious truth of Christian unity, and ceasing to exult in the questionable glory of independent and empty honours.

"From the same despatch we gather that the new cardinal is about to submit to the society of the Index the writings of M. Julio de la Clavière,—a character too well known to our readers to need description.

"Previously to doing so, however, his eminence notified to the heretical offender, who was a curé in his diocese, that he was formally interdicted. We cannot speak too highly of such pious zeal. The time has come when any further tolerance of men whose proceedings scandalize the Church, becomes positive complicity in their guilt. The French episcopacy is entering on a new path, of which this decided measure is an encouraging indication. Heretics will at length under-

stand that their heresies will be visited and crushed out by the Church with merciless severity."

His eminence, Cardinal Le Cricq, left his humble retreat at the Gèsu to assume his red robe of office; then, crossing the Mediterranean, he hurried home, and made a triumphal entry into T——.

His next step was to address a pompous manifesto to the clergy and faithful of his diocese. After having worked for his new dignity during three years of restless activity, he had the coolness to pen the following stereotyped phrases:—

"My very dear Brethren,—

"Providence—following out its impenetrable designs—has deigned to summon us to one of the highest dignities of the Roman Church, at a time when we were engrossed with the discharge of the duties of our humble apostolate amongst you. We have spared no effort to decline an honour deserved by others so much more than by ourselves. Our remonstrances were, however, in vain; so we are compelled to submit to the will of him who is, to us, the representative of God on earth.

"If, however, this illustrious trust, which we so little aspired to, is a favour of which we feel ourselves supremely unworthy, we cannot the less accept the great obligations of gratitude to the Holy See, which such a distinguished mark of confidence must necessarily entail," &c. &c. &c.

This affecting document threw the religious world of

T—— into a condition of ecstasy. "What profound modesty!" said the old ladies. "What edifying humility; what unprecedented indifference to worldly honours! The Pope was evidently compelled to thrust the hat upon his head."

The world thought otherwise, as will appear from the subjoined; and the world generally knows the rights of things:—

"My very dear Brethren,—

"'The impenetrable designs of Providence,' which have decorated our head with a cardinal's hat, are General . . . ., who has great influence at Court. To please the French Government, we played the liberal; to please Rome, we played the ultramontane. In return for such a troublesome task, it is but right and fitting that we should accept the sixty thousand livres attached to our rank as cardinal and senator.

"Whereupon we give you our benediction!"

A copy of the squib was enclosed to the cardinal himself, in a splendid envelope, with a fine seal of red wax. It had been posted at Paris, to ensure, with such a brilliant and imposing appearance, safe consignment to the hands of his eminence.

Such was the vengeance the world took on the cowardly time-serving of Monseigneur le Cricq.

CHAPTER X.

THE LAST BLOW.

WHILE the grand old capital of the south was ringing out a festive welcome to his eminence, on his return from Rome; while the whole population, in holiday dress, was thronging the promenades, public places, and thoroughfares, from the station to the centre of the town, in order to see the empurpled dignitary in the first blush of his triumph; while every parish steeple was giving forth its brazen clamour; while maidens, young and fair, and robed in white, were gathering under their banners; while schools, convents, colleges, societies of every kind, reverend fathers of the august company of Jesuits, their brows clothed with the pride of success, were swelling the conqueror's train;—two carriages, drawn by two strong horses, and driven by two mountaineers accustomed to ply between Luchon and Tarbes, took the road to St. Béat.

On the front seat of the first, under a kind of leather hood, sat a man still young, but with a grave, thoughtful countenance—his forehead furrowed by suffering, his face pale and wan. He was dressed in a light

overcoat, and sought shelter from the fierce sun-rays under the protecting covering.

It was Julio, the victim of the curses of the council of Limoux—the poor priest who had been interdicted by a sentence launched from Rome at the moment that the cardinal elect was meditating on death and judgment, heaven and hell.

Not a murmur had escaped him. The letter announcing the fact reached him at the moment that he was about to celebrate mass. The church bell had sounded, as usual, and two or three old men, with a few pious women, were assembled. Ever eager to obey, his first thought was to lay aside at once his sacred vestments. Fearful, however, of perplexing the little congregation, to whom his conduct would necessarily appear strangely unaccountable,—like his Master quitting Gethsemane for Calvary,—he ascended the altar-steps to offer for the last time the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist with the sacrifice of his life.

No tears fell on the book from which he read in solemn, earnest tones the preparatory prayer. Brave and self-possessed, he offered himself to God,—resembling one of those old warriors of Thermopylæ, who stood where the pass was narrowest, counting it all joy that their country should have their blood.

Julio, too, was dying, adoring the purposes of Providence, in the cruel sentence which had struck him down, interceding fervently for the ambitious prelate who had purchased the purple at so disgraceful a price; pleading for all his enemies in the Church, for the

fanatical bigots who had hunted him down with insatiable revenge; praying, too, for the venerable Pontiff elected to be the last to circle his brow with the diadem of the Cæsars, instead of the less arrogant mitre of a bishop of Rome.

Yet, his heart well nigh broke, his voice faltered, the pain of unutterable anguish overpowered his soul, as he pronounced the touching words wherein memory is preserved of those departed hence, and thought that among the grass and flowers blooming on the grave of Louise he was never to kneel again.

"O my God!"—such was his prayer in the few moments devoted by the service to that solemn remembrance —"they deprive me of everything, even of the sorrowful solace of lingering where she lies. Yet take Thou this heart, so bruised and broken, with the last prayer of Thy ministering servant never again to stand at Thy altar. Mine be Thy rest and peace, and glorious meeting soon with her who is gone before!"

And again he was composed and tranquil, as though the angel of hope had returned to gladden him. His voice thrilled through the church, as he uttered the prayer of all prayers, and realized that God was indeed his Father. With him the *paternoster* was an infant's dying murmur breathed into a mother's ear—the song of the swan—the sweetest and the last—the priest's last utterance ere his robe was stripped from his shoulders.

Before daylight next morning, the villagers being totally ignorant of his sorrowful departure, he left for

Tarbes. He had completed his travelling arrangements during the night, and set out for ever from the last parish that was to know him as a tender-hearted minister of the sanctuary and shepherd of the flock, purposing to seek an asylum in some secluded mountain village. The truly great are never utterly cast down. When man has done his worst, there is still for their solace the repose of nature and the peace of God.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RECLUSE OF THE VALLEY OF CAMPAN.

JULIO's health, painfully shattered as it was, had sustained a terrible shock from the death of Louise. He had, indeed, nerved himself to submit with dignity to the cruel sentence of banishment from his office, but the last farewell to his sister's grave proved a trial so terrible that he never recovered from its effects. The physicians of Tarbes recommended his selecting some very sheltered and quiet valley with a southern aspect, as his future home, and implored him in every possible way to avoid excitement and agitation, which would render all medical skill abortive.

Intimately acquainted with the entire neighbourhood of Luchon, he turned his steps now towards the Hautes Pyrénées, a region where he had never been before. After the dark solemn ravines, in the centre of the chain, there spread out before him in his new home, wide, sunny valleys, the steep sides of which were clothed with endless verdure. He was still in a mountain land, but flowers and foliage softened the awe of its sub-

limity, while winter cold and summer heat were eac subdued.

The Valley of Campan was the spot which he chos as his home. He was fortunate enough to light upon a little cottage about two kilometres from Campan, witl a pleasant orchard round it, and a wide meadow behind, while at the bottom of a meadow at the back, dashed on the impetuous Gave. He took the house, and within a week after he left Melles, was comfortably installed; one of his first acts being to write to his old friends, the Bishop, M. de Leich, and the noble-hearted Loubère.

Unfortunately M. de Leich was at that moment occupied with a rather strong desire to get on in the world. His reply savoured of this ambition, for the realization of which the aid of the new cardinal was very necessary. So its tone was cold; its regrets over Julio's want of judgment, many and vehement; and its affectation of patronizing interest at the close, all but insufferable.

"Deserted again," said Julio to himself.

The Bishop of A—— was colder still; he contented himself with advising Julio to bow to his diocesan, and implore his pity.

"Scirent si ignoscere manes," said Julio, sorrowfully. The tone of the letter convinced him that the only bishop who had had the courage to call him his friend, was bidding him quiet farewell, with nothing to offer but empty pity.

Not so, Loubère:—

"They have murdered you, my dear fellow," he said; "they have murdered you! Were it not that I feared the pain I might cause you, I should have gone to my friend the cardinal, demanding an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; and recalling to his recollection a certain promise he made me, from which I don't exactly see how he can possibly be absolved. Only I know it would break your heart to think that you had been the means of my executing righteous vengeance on that most unrighteous head. So you stay my arm; I am arrested by a consideration from your tender conscientious compassion, and by that alone. But a day is coming when I shall have to deal with him. It is right such cowardly poltroons should know that there is justice on earth, as well as that more terrible vengeance of heaven, the doom of cowards and traitors, of unnatural miscreants who deal in their brother's blood.

"I shall attend to him in due course, and favour him with a bit of my mind; but there is no hurry. We'll leave the good cardinal alone for a week or two, to admire his purple in peace.

"Meanwhile, quitting him, let me implore you, dear, dear friend, to take care of your invaluable health.

"You will believe my heart-words of yearning, love, and sympathy. Whenever you want me, whatever be your need, make but one sign, and you'll find me at your side. All I am, and all I have, is yours—yours unreservedly to use as you will.

"Your friend,

"LOUBÈRE."

Julio left the bishop's and magistrate's letters unanswered, declining their advice, and ignoring their presumptuous egotism. To them he was under the ban, so he left them alone; but he poured out his whole heart to his faithful and brave friend.

"Give up all your schemes of vengeance against the cardinal, dear friend; he is no enemy of mine; he has been but an instrument in the hands of a merciful Providence. You are right in supposing that it would be an unutterable grief to me, were you to visit him with a single reproach for his conduct in my case. He would think that it was at my instigation that you were taking a step which I should decline as a Christian and as a man most anxious to maintain his personal dignity.

"It is your friendship for me that leads you astray on this point: so generous a feeling, dear Loubère, ought not to instigate you to an ungenerous action.

"And now that I have delivered myself of this little lecture, let me thank you for your cheery, warm-hearted letter; the first and only one that has greeted me with solace in my lonely home. I have read it, and shall read it again and again: let me have plenty more; this last friendship left to me—this last soul-communion with one like yourself—will cheer me in my utter solitude.

"A thousand thanks for your generous offers. I trust I shall never need that special kind of aid; but it is not the less sweet, for all that, to know that

there is one ready to offer me the earnings of his daily toil.

"Adieu, dear friend.

"Ever yours,

"JULIO."

The arrival of an interdicted priest was quite an event in the peaceful, secluded valley where our hero had established himself. On the following Sunday, as the mountaineers were thronging the church path, at the summons of the service bell, he passed through the various groups to a seat at the end of the nave, close to the holy-water stand. There, silent and devout, absorbed in his own meditations, he joined reverently in the prayers of the celebrant, among the lowliest of the faithful assembled to worship.

Rustics are not clever at fanaticism, and with the exception of some five or six amiable reproductions of the old mother Caprède, the entire assembly bestowed looks of respectful sympathy on the gentle victim of priestly tyranny.

He had intended at first to present himself at the church in his soutane, to kneel at the foot of the altar, and join in the service there. An interdict is simply a prohibition from the exercise of ministerial functions, without interfering in the slightest with the privilege of participation in the sacraments of the Church; nor is it any positive disgrace, except when it has been incurred as a penalty for acts in themselves morally disgraceful. No reflection of such a character rested on Julio's

blameless Christian life. He might have safely assisted the curé of Campan at the Sunday mass, and, hindered though he was from officiating as priest, have served as acolyte; nor would it have been other than a solace to him to have discharged the office of a little child at a father's feet, in handing him the sacred elements. To such a duty he would joyfully have condescended, and with a man of a different stamp from the curé of Campan might easily have fulfilled it. M. Barnabé Capdeporc, however, was one of the most devoted worshippers of the *Catholic Atlas*, and the most ardent disciple of ultramontanism to be found in the Pyrenees. To him a priest, honoured with a place in the *Index*, and proscribed for his writings, was an agent of Lucifer—a creature who, in the good old times, would have been greeted with stake and faggot and flame.

Hence Julio's presence in the church Sunday after Sunday, notwithstanding that it was so thoroughly unobtrusive, vexed his righteous soul. Had the man been punished for profligacy he would have pitied and patronized him.

But as it was his creed that had ruined him, he commenced at once to hate him with cordial earnestness;—to such an unlimited extent, that, at the moment of the sprinkling of holy water, when the congregation, and Julio amongst them, was prostrate before the altar, his reverent eyes shot out glances of fiery indignation. Julio almost thought once that he was going to send the sponge at his head.

In the pulpit he became decidedly personal. The

enemies of God and the Pope, the wretched priests who countenanced revolutions; and, on the other hand, the exemplary Catholics who stuck up manfully and well for every imaginable and even unimaginable right of the chair of St. Peter—episcopal cyclicals and the grotto of Lourdes—such were the themes of his discourse—a convenient peg on which to hang disparaging reference to one specified not by name, indeed, but simply as the accursed of the Council of Limoux.

Meanwhile, as the excellent curé was somewhat ambitious as well as fanatical, and desirous withal of a better living, he thought it wouldn't be amiss if he aired his zeal a little in the presence of his superiors, and thus turned Julio's affairs to profitable account. So he marched off to Monseigneur of Tarbes, to whom he proceeded to introduce himself as a right valorous defender of the faith, observing how heart-broken he was at having a recalcitrant priest in his parish—one who had dared, in fact, to object to Rome. He was stricken to the dust, he remarked, at the bare thought that the civil laws permitted so flagrant a delinquent to insult the assemblies of the faithful by his most objectionable presence; and declared that should he take the liberty of dying in the place, without first retracting in full all his grievous heresies, it would be his—M. Barnabé Capdeporc's—painful duty to refuse him Christian burial.

On the occasion of the earliest clerical conference at Bagnères-de-Bigorre, he enlarged fully and feelingly on this most distressing topic, in the presence of all the

curés of the canton. By some, who knew their man, the object of all this zeal was pretty soon detected, while other soft-headed bigots applauded it as praiseworthy in the extreme. They were not radically bad, yet they managed, in some curious way or other, to arrive at the conclusion that so unmitigated a miscreant ought to be trampled under foot.

Julio, all the time, submitted to their growing malevolence with his usual gentleness and composure. He had managed to hold his own in the presence of episcopal and archiepiscopal might, so he wasn't likely to give in before these little people. He knew that their malice arose from perverted judgment, and not from any natural vindictiveness or spitefulness of disposition.

And yet his spirit was sorely distressed at this unbrotherly greeting from poor fellows like himself, trodden down under the hoof of despotism and Pharisaic tyranny. He had fought for them; and could he but have received a hearing in the Church, he would have worked out their freedom. And yet, though he had thus sought to be their true friend, his only reward, even from the most moderate, was the reputation of a fool; while bigotry denounced him as an enemy of Catholicism, and fit subject for the Inquisition.

According to a general law, which decrees, as a fact of experience, that the saviour should be the sufferer—the man who would bear away the miseries of others, the scapegoat in his ill-rewarded effort.

Thus passed August and September. Julio occupied five or six hours of each day in writing; intellectual

exercise being the one supreme refreshment of great minds. If it be true that earliest efforts are always disappointing, how intense, by contrast, the after joy, when the true idea that the thought conceived is expressed in worthy words. That joy was his.

What he left behind him, will recall to some the best passages in the works of Lamennais—more chaste and tender even than the writings of that master spirit. The one had loved and suffered; while with the other it had not been so, though his pages display, most undoubtedly, traces not only of a brilliant genius, but also of a sensitive and affectionate spirit.

What fragments we have found appear, from their matter, and from the notes accompanying them, to have been intended by their author for insertion in a work which he had been anxious to publish, on the destinies of Christianity. We give our readers a few of them—perhaps the last he ever wrote.

CHAPTER XII.

REMAINS.

"In this silent retreat, where the world is shut o and I am alone with God, I have often meditated the future destiny of the militant Church.

"Were I to judge by what I see, or argue for coming time by the lamentable exhibition of the prese I should come to the conclusion that Catholicism w rapidly nearing its decline.

"Confronted, after the mighty agitations of t eighteenth century, by a people ready to defy the spi of priestly tyranny—so opposed to that milder syste which obtained such wide success in the days of Bossu and Fenelon—the clergy have persisted in the effort seize the bull by the horns, and storm the enemy in submission. 'You ask for reason,' they say; 'we w compel you, without much ado, to swallow what w choose to force upon you. You insist on the onwa march of intelligence, of toilsome investigation scientific and other discoveries. We will anathemati this pseudo-civilization of which you boast. We w

bring back the days when men shivered, in their ignorance, before the almighty priest. We will proclaim aloud—through bishops in their charges, through curés in their sermons, through preachers in their impassioned harangues—that liberty is a curse; that there is but one claim — the claim of God — expounded by the priest; so that women now, and their sons by-and-by, shall credit what we declare, while we bring an obstinate race to its knees. If need be, we will ply you with all the tricks and terrors of a day gone by—God shall be depicted to you as a God of terror, hell as yawning to receive you. So will we force you to submission, and wring out of you the cry, "Have compassion on us and help us."'

"This fierce design, worthy of the brain of a delirious monk, has seduced an entire race of priests. They have adopted, with feverish earnestness, their unnatural and impossible scheme for the world's conversion. Disciples of Christ, as they profess to be, they have ignored His words, and called down fire from heaven on a sinful and stiff-necked generation. There they are, borne on by their wild enthusiasm, like Eastern fakirs, urging weak and superstitious men to the very strangest excesses of mysticism; imposing on them a ritual overburdened with meretricious ceremonies—the offspring of the long, weary night of mediæval ignorance.

"What, then, can be expected from such a system and such a priesthood, but what must logically be inferred from the present position of Catholicism? Either

modern ideas must go back, and bow before this t
reasoning rule, or the clergy must advance and progr
with them. It is scarcely possible to see beyond t
first step in this terrible dilemma.

"'Are we to recede?' the world will ask, in t
pride of its discoveries, the activity of its da
struggles, the vision of a horizon beyond, bright wi
glory and greatness; 'are we to abandon the prese
and sacrifice the future, that we may return to da
of ignorance and superstition? Impossible! Bett
worth, a thousand times, what we hold in our hanc
Bad bargain indeed to make such a pitiful exchange!

"'And are we to advance?' rejoin the priest
'advancement is fatal to our dreams of power, o
system of double rule? Cease your idle request; v
cannot and will not grant it.'

"Then comes the question, 'Who is to give way
and the answer is, 'Neither.' Is it asked whether the w
will be interminable? No; there will be an end and
victory. That that victory will be over an entire epoc
the most powerful in intellectual development that tl
world has known, is not very easy to believe.

"The only conclusion therefore, is, that the pries
will be the victims. The day of outlandish pretension
as set forth in its daily organs, expired,—a day of darl
ness and gloom will succeed.

"The clergy seem utterly incapable of perceiving th
void with which they are surrounding themselves;
crowd of routine pietists follow them to their churches
children, led blindfolded by a father's hand, lavish o

them enthusiastic worship,—they ask nothing more; women take them as their secret guides, revealing to them the recesses of their hearts. A few men come and tell them that they are the light of the world. With this varied testimony to their excellence, how can they be expected to believe that they are losing their hold upon the people,—more especially at a time when there are not wanting isolated tokens of mighty influence, and powerful reciprocal interchanges with illustrious potentates, who have enabled them to crush down the most determined opposition.

"And yet this delusion will come to an end one day. The child, become a man, will renounce his early credulity — ay, even the faith of his infancy, which only lodged in his head and never reached his heart. The woman who gloried in the confessional and the most unreserved priestly dominion, will find that a Church cannot go on without men, and be disconsolate at the wholesale male desertion. And as soon as these facts have become palpable to the priest himself; as soon as freedom of thought has asserted its dominion and compelled recognition, this hitherto impracticable mortal—of the full opinion, at present, that to doubt him is to sin against the Holy Ghost—will be driven to submission, and raise a faint and faltering cry of 'We have made a mistake; the world was not made for the priesthood, but the priesthood for the world.' On that day, if such a resurrection to a better life is indeed possible, there will be an arrest in the blind path to ruin. But ere that morning dawn; ere popes, cardinals, and

bishops—the whole array, in short, of those who ca themselves, and make others call them, princes—(priests accustomed to make their flocks bow down t them as a right of their office; ere these consent t become small, to be humble apostles, like the fisherme of Galilee, lowly missionaries in the great futur economy, living the quiet domestic life of Peter, or th toiling life of Paul at Corinth, what struggles an wrestlings must transpire!

"It is no easy thing for a large organized body, t admit that it has been in great error, even in huma affairs; how much more in religious matters? It wi be no light task for those who have claimed to be ir fallible to allow that they not only made the greate mistake in doing so, but, under their assumed infall bility, perpetrated a multitude of errors, all but involv ing the ruin of the Church.

"No, my brother priests, you may be exemplary, bu you are not infallible. Christian truth asserts tha Christ is in the bosom of His Church, to guard he from the dominion of error—a sublime privilege, whic you have misinterpreted, and the rights of which yo have arrogated to yourselves, being not the Churcl but only a part of it. You have developed your theor in the Pope *quâ* the Church, the bishops *quâ* the dioces and the curé *quâ* the confessional, and you are going t be well punished for your pains. The faster the worl grows, the less it will require to be dandled in you arms. Such infant treatment was all but unknown i the first ages of Christianity: so it isn't wanted now

The gospel is a law of liberty, and the present state of things, in which the priest appears as a mediator, with full powers, between God and man—would never have been brought about but for the re-action consequent on the barbarism which commenced, in the fifth century, to devastate the world.

"The farther civilization advances, the more rapidly will this anomaly disappear. But will the priest be wise in his generation? or will he misinterpret the signs of this coming time, as he is now misinterpreting or ignoring the present liberal movement—interpreting it as an insolent rebellion against God, a struggle between Christ and Anti-Christ?

"Many of us have thought, for a long time, that it might be possible to educate the clergy into a wiser and happier mind. Hence our efforts through the press—alas! utter failures. Meanwhile, others will succeed us, with the same hopes and dreams, to encounter the same obstacles. Long, long will it be before the priest will understand his lesson. Till then, all efforts to harmonize him with modern social life will prove impotent. He will have to submit to the evidence of facts, to sacrifice, and self-denial. But no faction ever yet dismembered itself or surrendered even its smallest fancied privilege without a vehement struggle. So we wait for a sign; and when the fortress has been stormed and taken, then will be the time for constructing a new edifice out of the ruins of the old.

"But as to how this transition is to be effected—whether it will crown a revolutionary civil war, or be developed

gradually, as by a quiet social reform, God alone knows. But of this we may be confident, meanwhile, that the mind of man will tear itself, inevitably, from the spider web of a dominant priesthood, that the clerical aristocracy will ere long be trampled under foot; that from that utter subjugation it will never recover. While I write, I see Evangel Truth rising from the overthrow, disencumbered of what once disfigured her form; glorious and immortal, the unperishable possession of the Church and the world.

"And all this in a speedily approaching golden future."

CHAPTER XIII.

LETTER FROM JULIO TO LOUBÈRE.

"CAMPAN, 10*th October*, 1862.

"DEAR FRIEND,—

"SEPTEMBER has closed upon me, leaving me wretchedly ill. I have a first-rate doctor from Bagnères-de-Bigorre; he tries to deceive me with the belief that I am improving; but I can see through all his vain attempts. He naturally enough treats me as he would any other patient; as, indeed, he ought to do, were it not for those mental attacks from which I am constantly suffering. I am often very weak. Four days ago I lay an entire afternoon on a couch in a dead faint, and I have been carried about as though I had no life left in me. However, I'm a little better now; strong enough, in fact, to write to you; now and then I have decided rallies, but I am in that state that I never know which letter will be my last.

"Dear Loubère, you are my only friend in this world; the only one I love to think of, as I draw up to the golden gates of a better. I am not afraid to

die. I know I leave my great work in a most imperfect state; indeed, I cannot say, whether even the twentieth century will see it any further developed. Some one will be found to take it in hand when I am gone. Progress is as much a law of religion as it is of all life; the dead alone are motionless and still. In the earliest ages of Christianity a good priest once discovered and enunciated that truth. His name was Vincent de Lérins, but men have managed to forget the teacher and his teaching together.

"So we shall have to go back to this doctrine, and constitute it the watchword of a new theological school. A day will come when the flag of progress will be urfurled by priestly hands, and religious and social advancement be held to be indissoluble. Indeed the two must grasp each other by the hand, and march on together. It won't do for the one to deny the existence of the other any longer.

"Those truths, in which the Church's salvation is involved, I have endeavoured slightly to illustrate. You know that Rome has not understood my efforts; that she has even punished me for them; that sbirri were down upon me. Yet my tears and sufferings will not have been for nothing. Others will take up the task I have been compelled to abandon. Let but one page of what I have written come under the eye of a candid, generous spirit, and he will yield to its arguments and enforce them himself; so that the long chain of witnesses will remain unbroken. Meanwhile, it will

be reserved for other ages to see the glorious day whose dawning only has been revealed to us.

"And I—I have been pronounced accursed by the bishops of the day. How could it be otherwise? They cannot imagine Catholicism, except as propped up in the arms of secular power.

"Now the slaves, now the tyrants, of worldly rule,—could they possibly be brought to acknowledge that the Church's sole prospect of greatness and glory lay in the total abandonment of the secular element? They have been consistent in their error, as consistent as I have been in never murmuring against them. Teaching what I have taught, I was just fit for the Inquisition.

"As for you, Loubère, you have come to blows with them. For this, I never commended you, though I saw at once that an impetuous spirit like yours was not likely to tolerate any intolerant treatment. You must have conceived against them the bitterest animosity. But, at present, I would have you forget these men altogether, and turn your thoughts inward upon yourself. I rely upon your sincerity and integrity to return to God. Your spirit, dear friend, has scarcely been right. Self-examination will convince you of this.

"And sometimes think of me; most probably this will be the last letter you will ever receive from me. I have made my will, and left directions that all my papers should be faithfully transmitted to you. I have bequeathed to you my books, furniture, and scientific collections. What you do not care to keep, you may as well deposit in some museum. My small property I

have left to the poor—the priest's natural heirs, when he has no needy relations to provide for. I have forbidden a headstone to my grave. You will see that my wishes are complied with.

"Adieu, Loubère.

"Ever yours,

"JULIO."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HOSPICE OF BIGORRE.

THE mournful presentiment which Julio had expressed in his letter to Loubère, was justified by the result. His disease made rapid progress. He was often seized with fainting fits. His physician advised him, as soon as the snow appeared on the mountains, to leave Campan, where medical aid might not be always obtainable in violent weather, and establish himself at Bigorre. Julio understood the meaning of the counsel, and acted upon it. Having completed his arrangements, he removed to the hospice there. What was left of the immense wealth of the La Clavière family, was insufficient to defray the expenses of a lodging; so, that he might not injure the poor who were his heirs, by touching the sum he had left to them, he resolved to end his days in a poor house.

The good sisters gave a cordial welcome to the illustrious sufferer. They set apart a warm, well-sheltered room for his accommodation, looking towards the long valley of the Gave, as it rolls along, and is lost to view

at the foot of the Pen de l'Hieris. Towards the end of November, the invalid felt a little better. He was able, indeed, on two or three occasions, to leave his room, and walk in the corridor.

One day, when he had prolonged his little tour beyond the ordinary time, he found Sister Theresa in his room on his return, a nurse, who had been specially appointed to wait upon him. He had frequently remarked her tender, delicate thoughtfulness in ministering to all his many wants, and wondered and rejoiced at the loving care he received.

She had prepared his meal, and taken care to secure his favourite food, to tempt his appetite.

"You are better to-day," she said, with a sweet smile, as she waited on him.

"Yes, much better," he replied; "you take such excellent care of me."

"Oh, that God would hear my prayer for your recovery!" and the tears ran down her cheeks.

Julio was much affected. What possible interest could his case create in the bosom of this poor sister, accustomed to see so many consumptive patients?

"Then you often pray for me, Sister Theresa?"

"Yes, indeed, M. l'Abbé; constantly; it is my greatest comfort."

"Thank you, dear friend; you will be the last to cheer me with real sympathy before I leave this world. I feel deeply what you have said, as well as all your constant attention to me, taxing you, sometimes, I fear, beyond your strength."

"You have a good claim on my prayers, sympathy, and efforts."

"I don't understand you, daughter."

And a deep blush spread over her cheeks, as though some communication was on the point of escaping her lips.

"I see you have not recognized me," she added.

"Certainly not. I never remember having seen you before."

"But I knew you the moment you entered this house; and right glad I felt when they appointed me to wait on you a week ago. Since I have been near you, however, I have not been able to summon courage enough to tell you who I was, or remind you of all that you have done for me. I owe you more than my life."

Julio thought that Sister Theresa had been one of his penitents at T—— or St. Aventin, and replied under that impression,—

"It is a minister's highest privilege to be permitted to do good in the ministry."

But Sister Theresa's distress and perplexity increased. She grew pale and trembled; then, falling on her knees at his feet, she seized one of his hands, and told him everything.

"I am the young girl," she cried, "from the Valley of Lys, whose honour you saved. You can understand now why I love you so dearly."

"Poor, dear child," said Julio; "God has been very gracious; and to me, too, for sending you to my bed-

side as an angel of consolation. I thank Thee, O Go
I can die in her loving arms. Thou hast not forsak
me, and I bless Thy name."

"No, no, you must not die; see, you are better ev
now. Be hopeful. Oh, that I could give my usele
insignificant life, for a noble existence like yours."

"My dear Theresa, you make a mistake. I ha
thought much, and written much, and God knows h
honestly this work has been achieved. Meanwhile, wh
profit is there left me of all my toil? what good ha
I done? You are a comfort to the poor; Julio, t
author, is useless to every one."

"Oh, but you must live; you shall live; I will ma
you live, by taking such care of you."

And from that day, known and loved, There
redoubled her tender ministerings. They were not
vain; they lengthened his life for a few weeks. E
heart warmed under the genial kindness; his sen
delirious moments, even, were not without their chan
Sometimes he mistook Theresa for Louise, and extend
his arms to her with a sweet smile.

But his disease, though it made slower progress, w
not the less sure. Julio was obliged to give up h
daily reading of the breviary—a practice which ha
been hitherto observed by him with the strictest reg
larity. Now, however, the effort was too much for h
head.

"You may lose him at any moment," the doct
had said to Theresa.

When Julio left Campan, the curé of that place can

to Bigorre, to discharge his conscience and display his zeal. He called upon the almoner and superior of the hospice, and, assuming an air of profound mystery, detailed the following marvellous intelligence:—

"Rome," he said, "had condemned the writings of that wretched priest, who was a revolutionist, in league with Garibaldi and all the enemies of the Papacy. He had taken part, moreover, in all the disturbances at Rome, and had defrayed the expenses consequent upon them. Had he presumed to die in his parish, he would have felt it impossible to have absolved and buried him without first obtaining from him a retractation of his errors. And they would be guilty of a grave dereliction of duty if they failed to use every effort to bring about his reconciliation with the Church."

The lady superior was a good woman, but very silly. On the other hand, the almoner wanted promotion. He thought he might turn an honest penny by the affair. At all events, the two came to an understanding, and one fine morning entered Julio's room with very long countenances. Sister Theresa was away; so they found the poor invalid alone.

"Speak, mother," said the almoner.

"You are a priest—you should speak to the abbé."

"My dear brother, I have a most painful duty to perform," observed the ecclesiastic.

Julio interrupted him.

"Oh, no; not at all painful. M. l'Abbé, you come to tell me to prepare for death. I hope, in a day or two, that I shall be able to receive the last sacraments;

you will be very welcome then; but I'm not quite ready just now."

"You misunderstand us."

"Do I? May I ask your errand then?"

"Your writings, your opinions——"

"But, my dear abbé, my writings surely have nothing to do with you? They trench in no way on Catholic teaching."

"Yet a recantation would be as——"

Julio raised himself in his bed, and looked at the two with a quiet, searching, serious look, but said nothing.

"I was observing that a recantation——"

"Did you not understand my silence, M. l'Abbé."

It was enough—the almoner and mother superior withdrew.

Managing, however, to propagate a rumour through Bigorre, "that Julio had refused the last sacraments, and was resolved to perish in his unbelief."

"You see we were right in saying that this wretched heretic would die the death of Luther and Lamennais," remarked the readers of the *Atlas* to one another. "It's just the way with all the Church's enemies. There he is struck down in the prime of life, an unpardoned blasphemer and hopeless reprobate."

The mother superior sent for Sister Theresa, and told her of the painful interview which had just transpired.

"Ah, dear daughter," she continued, "let us pray for this unhappy man. What a scandal it would create if he expired without the sacraments!"

"But, dear mother, he is so gentle, pious, and good; he would most certainly wish to die a Christian."

"Yet, if he is to die a Christian, he must retract his errors."

"What errors, mother? I know I'm ignorant; I've never read his books; but I overheard him saying to a priest from T——, a friend of his, who came over to see him, that he had never written anything against the doctrines of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church."

"Oh, yes; I know he said as much to the almoner. Still he is against the temporal power, and so is a heretic."

"Don't you think, however, that the poor priest might be left in peace?"

"Don't you think you are exercising your private judgment a little? Do you wish to take his part?"

"I don't understand you. I take the part of all those I wait upon."

"Quite so. Well, you'd do better if you held your tongue, and went and said a rosary for his soul, in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes."

"I will hold my tongue, mother."

The day after the visit of the mother superior and almoner, Julio felt himself worse. Sister Theresa was in the room, looking at him with a fixed, earnest gaze, revealing her inmost thoughts and longings.

"You want to ask me a question, Theresa; I see it in your eyes. Come, don't cry. I understand you;

you mean that my time is come, that I ought to prepare for death. Isn't that what you wish to say?"

"Oh, thank you, much," said Theresa, trying to restrain her tears. "You will do that for me, won't you?"

"For God first, and then for you, Theresa."

"Then I'll go and call the almoner."

"No, no, my dear daughter. I respect him as a priest, but I cannot speak to him in confidence. Oblige me by fetching the Abbé de Bordère."

And Theresa hastened to comply with his request, having first communicated it to the mother superior.

"Very good," she replied; "but the almoner should administer the extreme unction after his recantation. Otherwise . . . ."

The Abbé de Bordère was a priest living in retirement in Bigorre. He belonged to a good family, and had been professor of moral philosophy at Tarbes. Some dispute or other with his diocesan had led to his leaving France in 1826; on which occasion he set out on a missionary expedition in the wilds of North America. On his return from his wanderings, his love for his native country led him to establish himself at Bigorre, where he celebrated mass for a religious order in the town, confessed, visited the sick, cherished two or three private friends, and shunned priests.

He was about seventy years old—a clever man, of a cautious disposition, who spoke little and wrote nothing. He had read extensively, however; and, what was better still, had seen a good deal of the

world, and had a most vivid experience of life; reaping great instruction and profit from his numerous journeys.

He was naturally of a resolute disposition, and very self-contained and reserved. Outwardly, he was nothing more than a quiet, well-behaved priest, deferential to constituted authority. Inwardly, he had a soul on fire—a courageous, dare-any-thing spirit; indeed his resolve to search after truth, had led him almost to the verge of scepticism.

He soon reached Julio's room, and Theresa left them together.

"Don't go far away, sister," said Julio.

"Father," said he to the Abbé de Bordère, "I have sent for you because I can confide in you. I feel that my days are numbered, for I know my disease too well to be able to deceive myself on that head. I wish to die in the bosom of the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, in which I was born and of which I am a priest. I believe in her teaching. I have been mixed up with disputes, with questions raised by the interests of the clergy. I am against the temporal power. I think it useless, even dangerous, merely taking into consideration the extent to which it diminishes the moral weight of the Papacy. I have never attacked a single doctrine of the Church, and if I refuse to believe what was proclaimed at Rome on the 8th December, 1854, it's because I don't think the Pope has a right to add to the faith by transferring a simple opinion into a dogma for compulsory credence. I have, however, exposed

an ambitious order, which lords it over the priesthoc and charges itself with the general conduct of t Church's affairs; not because they robbed me and n sister of our fortune, but because I am convinced of tl evil tendencies of their system. I respect the great number of the men who compose their fraternity, b I have not spared the spirit which animates the My writings have been put in the *Index*, it is tru but I don't think you will consider that this circu stance should at all affect our relation to each oth at this moment. The question is, can I appear befo God with a light heart, though my brother priests ha written me 'accursed.' Am I really to be held accou able for the assumed scandal which they say I ha created? Tell me, father. If I have been a pro rebel against authority, say so; I am ready at on to humble myself before you, and retrieve the err which I never suspected myself to have committed.

"No, brother, no," said the old man gently, as seated himself by Julio's bed; "you have nothing retract. I know you well; I have read your writing and if Catholicism could be saved, it would be by m of your simple faith and entire devotion. Your on characteristics have been strictest orthodoxy, and mc utter freedom from Ultramontanism. Ah! dear brothe I have studied these questions, too. Those very idic who hate you, and have so mercilessly persecuted yo would have proclaimed you a saviour of the Churc could they have foreseen that the day must come whe the principles you hold will gain undoubted victor

You never denied a doctrine of the truth; yours have never been the struggles that I have known—struggles which to you alone I reveal for the first time. Mine has been a life diametrically opposed to yours. You have courted religious discussion; I have avoided it. Publicity has had its charms for you; by me it has been always dreaded. You will die a martyr, reprobated by the clergy, while I breathe my last in the bosom of the Church, having censured her in my own thoughts more severely even than you have done. But you will have your reward. Your name will figure where mine will have no place—in the page of history; though encircled with that violent abuse the lot of men who, in the true nobleness of their spirit, cannot brook the tameness of cautious reserve. You are passing from us, full of glorious views of truth; I remain, disenchanted and gloomy; deferring the final solution of my terrible doubts till the hour of my departure. Julio, would that I could die as you are dying. You quit this world, a real believer; angels of hope and love bearing up your soul to the bosom of God; while I, all but a sceptic, shudder at my desolate position. I know that you will not spurn from you the old man you have chosen to be your spiritual director in your dying moments. But the avowal of sufferings engendered in the bosom of one of your brethren by convictions such as you have cherished, will show you that you have not been alone in your struggles and trials. I have been confessing to you, you see, instead of you to me; for such revelations as I have made are

only for the ears of the dying. Were I to commit them to paper, I should be exposed to every form of contumely and persecution; and I have no idea of running the gauntlet. As for the abuse that has been heaped upon you, you know, as well as I do, that it has been permitted by a gracious God in wise, loving discipline for your soul. But He spurns their blasphemous anathemas. No, martyr-priest,—you are not accursed! You are the greatest of us all, for you have suffered the most. Your talents have been conspicuous; your life has been stainless: you might have reached the highest position in the Church, but you rejected the chance. You loved the truth, and fought for it; and you are going where a crown awaits you!"

He paused. Julio asked him to listen to his detailed confession of the faults of his life, for which he desired plenary absolution.

The decree of pardon pronounced, the dying saint seemed to pass into a condition of blissful ecstasy. At that moment a stranger entered, and hastily approached his bed. Theresa recognized him in a moment, and sank down at his feet.

"It's you, Loubere!" said Julio, as he marked the well-known face and convulsive grasp of the hand.

Yes, Loubère had come from Paris with all possible speed, warned by the last letter, so full of vague apprehensions.

"It is, dear friend," he said. "Thank God, I see you again!"

Julio seemed to rally for a moment; and, drawing

Theresa and Loubère towards him, said to them, in a low tone,—

"Poor things. God has brought you together again, by my death-bed. Loubère, listen to me. Theresa has expiated her fault and yours by devoting herself to suffering humanity. You have a great work to do in the priesthood. Use your utmost endeavours to recover your spiritual functions. Christian souls are often bowed down with sorrow. Oh, the blessing of a Christian priest, with a heart full of sympathy in their midst—the noblest mission here below!"

At that moment there came on an attack, which appeared, at first, as though it would have carried him off. He rallied sufficiently, however, to say to sister Theresa,

"My dear child, come here. Raise me a little. I feel I am getting weaker and weaker. Hold me in your arms. I should like to die there. You replace my beloved Louise."

Then, stretching out his cold hand to his faithful friend, he added,—

"Loubère, you have often told me that you owed me your life, while you saved mine in Italy. Yet there is one other boon I should like to have from you. A promise of a brighter time for your own soul. A hope, as I appear before God, that you will one day join me. Farewell—not for ever. IT IS BLESSED—VERY BLESSED—TO BELIEVE."

And a gentle sigh, as of a summer evening breeze, passed from the pale lips of the dying, across the face

of the ministering sister. There went forth upon its wings the soul of the martyr. Julio was gone!

His features shone with the sunshine of Heaven; as the calm grandeur of eternal rest throned itself on his marble brow.

The priest stood by, awe-struck at the sublime spectacle. Then, bending an earnest gaze on the rapturous repose and dignity that clothed the face of the dead:—

"Glory be to Thy Name, Lord God of hosts," he cried, as he fell upon his knees, breathing a final benediction; "Thou alone art just. Thou hast given to him, whom men held accursed, that peace of Thine which passeth all understanding!"

THE END.

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